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REMINISCENCES OF A SOLDIER.

VOL. I.

REMINISCENCES

OF

A SOLDIER.

BY

COLONEL W. K. STUART, C.B.

LATE 86th REGIMENT.

97481

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

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TO THE DEAR OLD CORPS,

THE ROYAL COUNTY DOWN,

IN WHICH, AS AN OFFICER, I PASSED THIRTY-FIVE HAPPY YEARS,

IN WHICH MY FATHER SERVED FOR THE SAME PERIOD,

AND IN WHICH MY ONLY SON IS NOW SERVING,

I DEDICATE

THESE REMINISCENCES,

THAT MAY TEND TO WILE AWAY AN IDLE HOUR.

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

IN a Military Life of more than thirty-five years active service, upwards of twenty of which were passed in tropical climates, a man must have met with many singular and amusing characters, and witnessed many strange and eventful scenes.

The quiet citizen and the young soldier of the present day, if they ever deign to read this book, will certainly be astonished, and, no doubt, disgusted, at the merciless severity of our military discipline in former times, and wonder how such acts of cruelty as are here related, by an eye-witness, could ever have been permitted in Christian England to be inflicted on the gallant soldiers who had so often bravely and victoriously fought her battles.

I have no very astounding adventures or amusing tales to narrate, I am merely availing myself of my idle moments to give to the public a description of scenes which I have witnessed, characters I have myself known, and, in a few cases, incidents that have been described to me by officers many years older than myself, and whose character is sufficient guarantee for the truth of the events they related to me.

The accounts of the strange and curious General Courts-Martial which I have given are strictly accurate, as I was myself a member of them, and there are, no doubt, many military men now alive who may remember the circumstances which I have narrated.

I flatter myself that no military man is more perfectly conversant than myself in all that appertains to the British soldier, his good and bad qualities, his great gallantry and devotion to his officers, when treated as a soldier ought to be.

As this work was written nearly seven years ago, it is unnecessary to state that many military changes of very great moment

have been made since that time. Corporal punishment has been totally abolished, purchase done away with, and many alterations made affecting both soldier and officer—whether for the better or not, time will show. I must confess, I myself am Tory enough to think, "that things worked very well in old times as regards the officers, and I am of opinion that it would have been wise to let well alone." However, I may be mistaken, but, "we shall see what we shall see!"

Born and brought up in the army, I never kept aloof from the soldier, but freely joined with him in his athletic games and pastimes; nor did I ever find, in so doing, "that familiarity bred contempt," or disrespect, but quite the contrary.

Young officers may profit by the advice and experience of an old soldier, whose system of command has received the decided approbation of those high in authority, and particularly that of the late gallant and lamented General Sir George Brown, G.C.B., Commanding the Forces in Ireland, as the

following letter from him to the author will sufficiently prove.

"Royal Hospital, Dublin,
"18th September, 1862.

"My dear Stuart,

"I have repeatedly stated to you that there is no regiment in the command that stands higher in my estimation than the 86th Regiment, or that seems to me more admirably managed in all respects. The conduct of the men, under all circumstances, has been excellent and most exemplary, and such as can only be attributed to your unremitting attention to your duty, and the excellent system of discipline established and maintained by you in the corps.

"For myself, I regret extremely that circumstances should have induced you to retire from the further active exercise of the duties of a profession for which you seem in all respects so admirably calculated, and I cannot but feel that the retirement of an officer of your qualifications and experience is a loss to the Service which cannot easily be replaced.

"I have recommended you in the strongest manner for the "Good Service Pension," to which you appear to be so well entitled from the length and nature of your services in the Field and otherwise, and which you will no doubt obtain.

"Wishing you a long continuance of health and happiness in the retirement to which you are unfortunately for the Military Service about to retire.

"I remain,
"My dear Stuart,
"Very faithfully yours,
"G. BROWN."

Coming from a soldier like the writer, it is indeed a feather in my cap; and I am proud to add that I duly received the "Distinguished Service Pension."

Several old soldiers of the old corps in which my two uncles and two brothers also served, and under the colours of which my brothers and myself were born, are still alive, all of whom were present at the scenes I have mentioned as occurring at the depôt, and in the early part of my career in the

West Indies, and often pay me a visit to talk over the interesting reminiscences of "auld lang syne."

With respect to Fermoy, Burnley, &c., and the events which happened at these places, *only thirty-five years ago*, I am happy to say that there are plenty of the friends of those days still "to the fore;" and not long ago five of us, two of whom are still serving Her Majesty, dined together, and had a hearty laugh over the "vagaries" of "old McAdorey" and his "chicken-broth."

In conclusion, I may say, "there were very wild fellows in those days, but none the worse soldiers."

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REMINISCENCES OF A SOLDIER.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH AND FAMILY—FAMILY RELIC—IRISH BLOOD—TRAGICAL LOVE STORY—JOHNSON, BISHOP OF WORCESTER—ANECDOTE OF A WORCESTER CLERICAL FAMILY—FATALITY IN MY MOTHER'S FAMILY—EXTRAORDINARY MILITARY CHARACTERS—MAJOR PETHER O'BLAZES—THE GERMAN SENTRY AND PADDY PURCELL—A STERN DISCIPLINARIAN—OFFICERS OF THE OLD SCHOOL—NOTHING EXTRAORDINARY—COLONEL DONALD MACDONALD.

I WAS born in the army, my father Scotch, my mother English, how many years ago I am afraid to say, but time has sadly changed the hue of the brown curly locks I was so fond of in my youthful days.

On my father's side, we boast of an old family and true Scotch name; indeed we claim, in some way, to be descended from that grand Scottish hero, Sir William Wallace; and I well recollect, during my boyish time, the great fuss made on New Year's

Day relative to a ring said to have belonged to him, and which had come into our family by marriage, and was gifted to the eldest daughter from generation to generation. I think my great-grandmother, one of the Ayrshire Dunlops brought it to us. It is now in the possession of my cousin, Miss T. C——], Perthshire.

At my aunt's house, who, at the time of which I speak, was the possessor of the invaluable relic, a large dinner party was always given on the opening of the new year. The ring, a large thumb one, worn almost to the thinness of a wafer, with a single little cairngorm stone in, was placed on a silver salver in the centre of the table, the observed of all eyes. Everyone is aware of the adoration felt in Scotland for anything connected with the favourite national champion; but I certainly should be sorry to vouch that the ring so displayed ever had graced the finger of the gallant Wallace.

Two of my ancestors were general officers at the siege of Derry; one in the army of King William, the other, unfortunately my direct one, on the other side—a piece of

stupidity for which we afterwards suffered in purse and land. My progenitor married a lady of the "Maiden City" called Lysle, and I believe some of the name still inhabit Derry, or the neighbourhood. This is the only Irish blood in my veins, but it may account in some measure for the great love and admiration with which I regard the Irish soldier.

On my mother's side I also claim to be of a very old family, English for many generations, though the name Baines, and the crest, a skull and crossbones (Scottish banes) favour the tradition that they also originally came from Albyn. It was proudly said that for some hundred years no male of the family had ever dirted his hands by trade, but either lived upon his own property, or was a member of the Church, the Army or the Navy. They say we came into England with "bonnie King James," first of that name, and settled in Suffolk, Wiltshire and Devonshire. All the different families so denominated have still the same crest, but some of them spell the name Baynes, others Baines.

I recollect many years ago, asking a cousin of mine in London, a great genealogist, if a certain Yorkshire radical, who was creating some stir at the time, was any relation of ours. In the most serious manner, and as if it was a circumstance of the utmost moment, he replied,

"I am very much afraid he is, for about two hundred years ago a branch of our family emigrated into Yorkshire, became cloth-merchants, and I much fear he is one of these descendants."

I burst out laughing, and my town coz was very much offended thereat, as he did not look upon it as a laughing matter at all.

My mother's aunt was married to the late Sir John Knightly, of Fawsley Park, Northamptonshire, and used to pass most of her girlish days there, until the death of Sir John, who was succeeded by the late Sir Charles. A family with whom they were very intimate, named S——, and who lived a few miles from Fawsley, occasioned a great deal of talk at the time my mother resided there. One of the daughters of the house was a most beautiful girl, and in a

Militia regiment stationed at Weedon, was a very handsome young Captain. They became deeply in love with one another, but the S——s were a very old county family, and finding that the officer was the son of a London linen-draper, they broke off the match. The lover sent the unfortunate girl a letter imploring her to meet him in a lonely part of the grounds, near the house. She complied with his request, and when they met he shot her dead, and then destroyed himself. Their bodies were found close together.

My mother was the youngest of thirteen children, and belonged to a very clerical family. Her grand-uncle was the celebrated Johnson, Bishop of Worcester, to whom a monument is erected in the Cathedral of that city, with an inscription expatiating on his many virtues; while Horace Walpole, in his memoirs of George the Second, to whom the Bishop was chaplain, speaks of him in very different terms. Horace says, "This was Johnson, Bishop of Worcester, a Jacobite spy, and not only that, but a traitor to his own party." Reading this to

my mother, a very old lady, she replied, "It may be very true what he says, but he was a very kind nice old man, and left me five thousand pounds."

My grandfather was in the Church, in those days when parsons hunted three times a week, had divers livings which they seldom or never saw, and were altogether a very different class from those of the present day. I cannot help relating an anecdote of a Worcester clerical family in the early part of this century. It was told me by my dear old friend Jack Barnet, now nearly forty years in his grave, and himself a native of that county.

There were five brothers in the Church; the eldest, from great interest, had obtained his mitre, and was Bishop of some place or other when comparatively a young man. The brothers used to meet once a year and dine at the "Hop Pole," an hotel in Worcester; on one of which occasions my friend was present. After dinner the conversation turned upon pugilism, at that time greatly the fashion in England. The fighting merits of Tom, an ostler in the

hotel, were brought forward, but the Bishop asserting that he was himself a better man than Tom ever was, and that if any of his brothers thought the contrary, he was ready to have a turn with Tom at once. The ostler was sent for, and expressed his willingness to have a go in it His Grace. Tables accordingly were cleared away, and, after a determined fight of half an hour, poor Tom was pommelled to his heart's content, and the pugnacious ecclesiastic declared the better man.

Reverting to my mother's family, a curious and melancholy circumstance connected with it was the number of violent deaths by which many of its members were cut off. Her brother, a captain in the navy, was drowned at sea; a younger brother lost his life while bathing in the river Severn; another, a captain in the army, was the only man killed on board a vessel, beating off a French privateer, near Guernsey; her eldest sister was burnt to death while dressing for a ball in London; another sister, wife of Colonel Deverell of the 47th regiment, and mother of the late lamented Generals William and

Thomas Deverell, was, with three of her children, drowned in the wreck of an Indiaman off Hastings, no person escaping from the unfortunate vessel except the black cook. My poor brother, an officer of the 86th regiment, was also drowned while out shooting in India; and my mother herself was nearly burnt to death, but fortunately recovered, though she ever afterwards retained the marks of the injuries which the flames had inflicted on her.

Thirty years after my aunt, Mrs. Deverell's, sad fate, my father and mother went to Hastings to see her grave. While they were looking at the monument, an old man came up and said: "Yes, poor lady; I found her body and brought it on shore."

My father joined the army early in the present century, and a very good story is told of his entrance into it. Lord Cathcart, a friend of my grandfather's—at that time Military Secretary, or Commander-in-chief —I don't know which—enclosed a commission, by purchase, to the old gentleman, at his request, for his son, at the same time directing him to join the depôt of the 25th

Borderers at Sunderland. Having obtained his outfit, he proceeded on horseback—the custom in those times—to join the regiment, and was kindly received by the officers of that gallant corps. A young good-looking fellow, singing an excellent song—in Jacobite ballads unrivalled—a capital hand at telling a story, with plenty of money, and lavish of it (how my worthy grandfather stared at the outfit bill sent in to him, in which the two first items were: twenty-five pairs of Cashmere drawers; twenty pairs of dancing shoes), who such a favorite as the dashing young Scot?

One morning, while at breakfast in the mess room, about three weeks after his arrival, and at the very moment when he was in the middle of one of his best stories, a mess-waiter entered the room, and casting a very queer look at my worthy dad, motioned the senior officer towards the door. The senior did not choose, however, to leave his place, but asked the waiter what the devil he wanted. The man stammered and stuttered, but was unable to deliver himself of his message, until, excited by the oaths

and threats of the angry officer, he exclaimed, with true cockney accent and emphasis:

"Vell! there's a chap outside as says he's the true hensign, and that this 'ere von is an himpostor."

My father started up, as did the other officers. Highwaymen in those days, with the manners and appearance of gentlemen, were not uncommon (1805), and suspicious glances were, ever and anon, turned upon the young officer, when the door opened, and in rushed a stout young fellow dressed in corduroys and worsted stockings, who, in a stentorian voice, and in broad Scotch, roared out: "Whaur is the domned scoundrel that has ta'en my name."

The young man was asked to explain himself, and the result of the inquiries which were made proved that, sure enough, "Corduroys" was the real Simon Pure. He was nephew to Colonel F——, commanding the head-quarters in the West Indies; and the explanation of the whole affair was that two commissions, by purchase, had been issued on the same day to two men of the

same name, and, by mistake, Lord Cathcart had enclosed "Corduroy's" to my grandfather, and my father's to the other party, who, however, discovered the mistake, but was not aware that my father had joined the 25th regiment instead of the 67th, to which he was appointed. For many years after, this my father was called "Jamie Stuart, the Pretender."

The officers tried to effect an exchange between the parties, but "Corduroys" would not consent to such a solution of the difficulty, and my father, very much grieved to leave a regiment in which he was already becoming a favourite, bade farewell to the gallant Borderers. The other young aspirant to military honours joined the 25th in the West Indies, where, poor fellow, he died soon after.

Upwards of thirty-five years after this occurrence, I happened to dine at a country-house in Lancashire, when an old gentleman, one of the guests, came up to me and said, "From your name and great likeness, I am sure you are a son of 'Jamie Stuart, the Pretender.' Finding such to be the case,

he told me the story I had often heard, and informed me he had been the senior officer present at the breakfast scene, and had never seen my father from that day.

My father, who was a man with an excellent memory, possessed a great fund of anecdote, and often told me of extraordinary characters he had met with in his military career. Among these, one of the most amusing was the late "Pether O'Blazes," of the 404th regiment. "Pether," as he was always called, was a man of immense size and strength, most kind-hearted and good-natured, but, like the generality of his countrymen, rather quarrelsome, and a great duellist, but so bad a shot with a pistol that, in all his numerous affairs with that weapon, he was never known to touch his man.

My father's first acquaintance with "Pether" commenced soon after he had joined the service, when the regiment was stationed at Dundalk in Ireland. The gentlemen of the county had invited the officers of the garrison to a grand ball, given by them at the hotel in the town. "Pether"

had arrived that day on the recruiting service, and, of course, dined at the mess, and went to the ball, where a scene occurred which certainly was never anticipated by any of the regiment.

"Pether" and my father were standing together when one of the "Masters of the Ceremonies," a quiet-looking old gentleman, dressed, in the fashion of the time, with periwig and pigtail, came up to them, and, making a low bow to Pether, said, "May I have the pleasure of introducing you to a partner for the next dance?" Pether, looking at him for a moment with drunken gravity, made no answer, but deliberately seizing the pigtail, which in those days was worn very long, turned it completely to the front and brought it down over the nose of the poor man, who, astonished and perhaps frightened at the gigantic appearance of his assailant, rushed away, but presently returned with a whole posse of stewards and friends, who of course demanded from O'Blazes the meaning of such outrageous conduct. While they were doing so, another pigtail seemed to have tickled Pether's fancy, for he at-

tempted to take the same liberty with it as he had done with the former one. He was, however, foiled in the attack, and received the contents of a snuff-box in his eyes. Without the least delay, Pether hit out right and left, and in the space of a few moments pigtails and periwigs were knocked off, while their owners were sprawling on the floor in different directions, and ladies, in the midst of the confusion, were screaming, gentlemen swearing, and Pether, as he called it, "powdering away." The stewards, who had obtained reinforcements, succeeded, after a desperate struggle, in finally overpowering Pether and kicking him downstairs into the street. The officers who had brought him to the ball were of course dreadfully annoyed, and next morning my father and another were deputed to wait upon him, and demand a most ample apology in writing for his gross conduct. They found Pether with upwards of a dozen challenges, written by himself, with blank spaces in which the names were to be inserted. He knew nothing of how the matter had occurred. It was sufficient that he had been severely pom-

melled and kicked out of the room, and fight some person he would. The threat of a court-martial, however, brought him at last to his senses, and he indited a most humble apology, which was at once accepted, for in those days conduct of that description was not looked upon in the light it most properly would be in the present day, and drunkenness was too much the custom of the time to be considered a very great offence against society.

Some years after, my father being on the recruiting service at Worcester, again fell in with his friend Pether, who was on the same service at Gloucester. The people of that quiet city, it seems, had not paid him much attention, and he was consequently very irate thereat. He informed my father that all his attempts to get up a quarrel had failed, and that there was no pluck in the "dirty English beggars."

In the course of their peregrinations, they went into the reading room, or city club, which was rather crowded at the time; and they had scarcely entered it, when to my father's astonishment Pether sat down

beside a table, and placing one of his legs upon it, began to address it in the following terms :—

"Arrah, Pether, that's a beautiful leg of yours; the devil a nater I ever saw. Ah, look how aisy it lies on the table!" Then gazing round with a savage scowl, he roared out, "I should like to hear any jontleman say, 'Mr. O'Blazes, take your leg off the table.'" The people stared in astonishment at him, but said nothing; and he, finding no one disposed to humour him by applying for the removal of the said limb, deliberately placed his other leg on the table, and addressed them both :

"Upon my credit, Pether, thims a beautiful pair of legs; devil the like you'd see from here to the Cove of Cork. Begor, ye've the legs for the ladies, a purtier pair I never looked at." Finding still that no notice was taken of his strange conduct, he took a survey of the room, and in a voice of thunder, exclaimed,

"By J—s, is there any jontleman will say 'Mr. O'Blazes, take aither of your legs off the table.'"

But Pether never managed to get up a fight in the tranquil city of Gloucester, and not long after he was removed from it, an application to that effect having been made to the authorities by some of the citizens, who had had quite enough of the mad Irishman, as they called him.

O'Blazes, after this, proceeded to India, where his corps was stationed. At mess one night, at a very late hour—or rather, I should say, early in the morning—a quarrel somehow arose between him and one of those German officers of whom, in those days, there were considerable numbers, in command of German troops in our army. The German was, like O'Blazes, a very tall powerful man. Not choosing to wait until daylight to have the pleasure of shooting one another, they found in the mess-room a large pair of scissors, the only dangerous weapon at hand. The German broke the scissors in two, and fastened the two parts to sticks. With these unusual weapons they commenced their extraordinary encounter. For nearly ten minutes they continued prodding at one another, and when they were at length

separated, both were so severely wounded, that it was a long time before either of them was fit for duty.

The affair of this German officer recalls to my recollection the story of a German soldier in the 86th Regiment, when my father was in it. The incident shows the stern discipline of the nation, so lately proved in France, and the tenacity with which an Irishman can hold on to life. The German was on sentry, and Paddy Purcell, the Adjutant's servant, having a little drink in him, was teasing the foreigner. Paddy was several times warned by the German not to interfere with him, or come upon his post; but no warning would stop the thoughtless Irishman, who, coming up close to the sentry, attempted to give him a friendly slap in the face. The sentry at once ran Purcell through the body with his bayonet, at the same time firing; but, strange to say, though most severely wounded, Paddy recovered and came home with the regiment to England. I think none but an Irishman could have taken both bayonet and ball through his body, without a fatal result.

One last anecdote of O'Blazes, and I have done with him. The circumstance I am about to mention occurred when his career was nearly completed, and was told to my governor by Mr. Drummond, of the Bengal Civil Service. O'Blazes had grossly insulted this gentleman, who called him out, and they met close to Calcutta. Having fired three shots at each other without effect, they found that their ammunition was exhausted; but, not being yet satisfied, a messenger was despatched to the city for more powder and ball. "What was my astonishment," said Drummond, "when O'Blazes came up to me in a sparring attitude, saying, 'Something in the manetime, Sur,' and knocked me down. I of course retaliated as well as I could, but was a mere child in the hands of such a giant, and, notwithstanding the interference of the seconds, I was so severely injured that I was taken home insensible. I was confined to my bed, and lay there brooding on my wrongs, and longing for the time when I could take my revenge on the ruffian by shooting him. In this state of mind I cannot say that I experienced any

great regret when one morning my servant came into the bedroom and said, 'Major O'Blazes was murdered last night by some Arabs.' And such, on inquiry, I found was actually the case. He had gone the night before into a low blackguard part of Calcutta, and had, as usual, got into a row, in the course of which the Arabs managed to split his skull, thick although it was, and killed him on the spot." In the present day a man of this description would not be allowed to remain six months in the army.

Another character, although of a very different description, was well known to my father, and also to myself in my young days, Old Donald Macdonald, whose rather eccentric will occasioned two trials some years ago in Edinburgh, where I was cited as a witness.

Born in the Isle of Sky, of, I believe, rather humble parents, his two brothers and himself obtained commissions in the army, through the interest of the chief of their clan. This must have been about the end of the last century, or beginning of the present one. The three brothers went to the East,

where two of them died—one a captain in my own regiment, a smart, brave officer, at Ceylon, where the climate, in a few months, annihilated the two flank companies, which had been sent there; the other a quartermaster, leaving to his remaining brother all his savings, a very pretty round sum.

Old Mac was a very singular person. Small, wiry, and active, like a terrier of his native Isle, he was yet endowed with prodigious strength. It was a matter of heroism to endure a shake of the hand from him, after you had once felt its power. I have seen the strongest fellows in the regiment roar when they encountered Mac's vice-like squeeze, for the old man was very proud of his strength, and nothing pleased him more than to use it in a friendly manner on his comrades, but few cared to encounter its effects a second time.

An excellent officer, but a fearful martinet, no climate seemed to have the slightest effect upon his iron frame. So little did he care about the deadliest heat, that, when a very old man, and rich in the "world's goods," he accepted a majority in a West India Regi-

ment stationed at Sierra Leone, and proceeded there. In a letter I received from him some time after his arrival at that grave of Europeans, he said, "The only fault he found with the place was, it was too cold."

He was very close in money matters, I might say penurious, and never went into society; but if the regiment wished to give a ball, or get up any kind of amusement, he was the first to subscribe, although he never participated in the revelry himself. He was however, a cruel man to the soldier, and, like many officers of the olden time, who had served the greater part of their life in India, he considered the only panacea for offenders in the ranks, was flogging, and I certainly think he would have flogged his own father, if he had had the misfortune to be under his command, and had given him a chance to do so.

I recollect an occasion on which two poor fellows were being marched past him in the morning to the square already prepared for punishment, when one of them stopped, and said,

"Will yer honour let us off?"

"Not a lash," was the reply.

"I believe ye from my shoul," retorted the soldier.

He had a diabolical hatred to women, particularly ladies, and his common saying was, "Anything is better than a bad marriage."

One day a reckless Irishman, named Dickie Copeland, was brought into the orderly-room a prisoner, at St. Kitts, for having absented himself for four days. On this occasion Mac made a pun, and as it was the only one I ever heard that he was guilty of, I will tell it.

"Well," said Mac to Copeland, "what have you got to say, and where have you been?"

"I've been in the mountains, yer honour, looking for monkeys," replied Dickie.

"I'm afraid, my mannie," said Mac, "in looking for monkeys you'll catch cats."

Dickie was sentenced to receive "three hundred lashes," and took his punishment like a man, not having uttered a groan. While putting on his shirt, which he insisted on doing himself, he turned to Mac, and with a most comical leer said, "Begor,

Captain, you and I don't often agree, but upon my sowl I think this is better than a bad marriage." Old Mac looked as if he was almost sorry Dickie had been flogged.

I believe the only case in which he was ever known to pardon an offender was at my instance. A man named Lucas, a quiet little Englishman, whose wife had been nurse to my mother, was foolish enough to remain out of barracks all night. He was a very well conducted man, but there was no escape from either two or three hundred lashes under Mac's *régime*. However, I was determined to try what I could do; I went therefore, and most earnestly interceded for Lucas.

"No," was the stern reply, "he has had his fun, and I'll have mine."

It was useless to continue solicitations to which Mac would not listen, and I went sadly away, in fancy already seeing poor Lucas at the halberts.

The court-martial was put in orders to assemble next morning, and I really felt so much for the poor devil that I could hardly close my eyes all that night. When I got

up I determined once more to try to get him off. Orderly-room time I thought the best to "beard the lion in his den," as there would then be many officers and sergeants present, a circumstance, however, which, so far as my request was concerned, might produce a favourable effect or the contrary. I accordingly addressed Mac, and again entreated pardon for Lucas. The stern disciplinarian glared at me with the look of a tiger, and then, suddenly starting from his chair, roared out,

"Have your wish, Sir, but, by G—d, if he commits himself again I'll flog you in his place."

Not caring what he said to me, having gained my object, to the great surprise of all, I carried off the escaped victim, who, I am happy to say, never gave him a chance again.

While the regiment was stationed at Goa in the East Indies, Mac fought a duel with the late General D. A——, at that time a subaltern in the corps; and to show how trivial a matter in those days brought men pistol to pistol, I will relate the circumstances.

One evening at mess, Mac, being, I suppose, not in the best of tempers, said, "Mr. D. A——, I'll thank you for some of that dish." "Certainly, Mr. Mac," replied D. A——, laying the emphasis on the Mr. in the same manner as he had been addressed himself. Mac immediately left the table and sent a friend to him to arrange a hostile meeting. They met next morning accordingly, my father being D. A——'s second. At the first fire Mac shot his opponent through that part of the person on which we generally seat ourselves. On seeing D. A—— fall, Mac rushed up to him, exclaiming, "I declare to G—d I did not mean it." "I wish you had thought of that five minutes ago," replied his victim, twisting and turning on the grass. They were always good friends after.

He had a great deal of dry Scotch humour, and one day I saw him turn the tables beautifully on our Colonel, the late Sir M. C——. Although the regiment was almost entirely composed of Irishmen, there were a few Scotchmen who had volunteered from the 93rd, in the West Indies. Among these, a

man named Neilson was about the greatest blackguard I ever met with. Born a gentleman, he was a tall, handsome, well educated man—one of those who in such cases are generally the worst soldiers. Neilson was brought up for some crime before all the officers assembled in the orderly-room, and on this occasion Sir M. C——, a warm-hearted Irishman, who was a great wag in his way, thought to get a rise out of the canny Scot. So, addressing Mac, he said, "Here is this fellow Neilson up again, he is the greatest ruffian in the regiment, and I am sorry to say a countryman of yours." Mac made no reply to the Colonel, but looking steadfastly at Neilson said, "Neilson, my mannie, ye must have been a terrible blackguard to have enlisted in an Irish regiment."

I need not say the laugh was not against old Mac.

He was certainly one of the most clannish Highlanders I ever met. Well do I remember this iron-hearted old man crying like a child, when the gallant Camerons, the 79th, marched into Salford barracks to be inspected by the late Sir Charles Napier.

In the "garb of old Gaul," their pipers all playing at their head, they were certainly a magnificent sight, and the effect it had on Mac was something wonderful. The tears were running down his cheeks, and his legs shook so that he could hardly stand. Curious to say he had never before in his long service seen a Highland regiment in their full costume, and the sight brought back to his mind the time when, a wee kilted laddie, he climbed the banks and braes of Skye. He staggered, I may say, up to me and said, "Oh, Willie, does not that warm the blood in your veins, and make you proud of our old land." I confess I was wicked enough to say, I thought the music of the bagpipes the most infernal row I had ever heard, perhaps very good for savage tribes. With a bitter scowl he called me a "damned Lowlander," went into his barrack-room and was seen no more that day. In the thirty years he had served in the regiment he had never taken a day's leave of absence, but when the corps was stationed in Clonmel, he was prevailed upon to apply for two months' leave. This he obtained and started for

Dublin, *en route* to Scotland, where he had never been since he entered the army. On the third day he was seen parading the barrack square at Clonmel; he had reached Dublin, but his heart was with his regiment, and he returned by the next coach.

He died in 1859 at a small watering-place in Scotland, and left £30,000 to endow a school for boys of his own name, any who spelt it otherwise being ineligible. This will was disputed by his relatives, on the ground of insanity, and the first trial was gained by them; but a second trial having taken place, the will was maintained. In fact there were no grounds whatever for saying he was out of his mind. The behaviour of his nephews was not what he could have wished; he had been very kind to them on many occasions, and had placed them in situations, which they lost by their own misconduct; for myself, I was not in the least surprised at the will, knowing the love —I may say adoration—he felt for his name and clan. Peace to his ashes, he was a soldier of the old school, a man who would have gone to the death in obeying orders,

and perhaps, had it not been for the fearful system and customs of the time, he might have been a different man to the poor soldiers. Among the officers he was always a favourite, but certainly in the ranks he well earned his title as "Tiger Mac."

Another character that I frequently met in my young days, and who may still be remembered by some of my readers, was Colonel —— of the — regiment. He was also a Scotchman, and in the flogging line much of old Mac's type; but while the latter during the punishment kept a stern silence, the former would continually address the delinquent, telling him over and over again the crime he had committed. On one occasion the unfortunate devil was flogged for insubordination to an officer named L——b, of the 93rd regiment. The Colonel commenced by eulogizing Mr. L——b, who was a splendid looking man, and then addressing the culprit said, "Ye abuse Maister L——b, Maister L——b is the finest looking man in the service, he's sax feet five in his stocking soles, ye abuse a mon like that, a mon that

wad put ye in his pocket and never ken ye were there."

The soldier did not take his punishment very well, and cried out "Oh, take me down, Colonel, for the love of G—d take me down."

"Tack ye down," was the reply, "ye scoundrel, if I was to tack ye down, I think the deil out of hell wad come and claw me on the spot."

There are no such stern martinets in the present age, thank God, and we can well dispense with such men, of whom there could have been few even in their own time.

I was doing duty with his regiment for some months; and on one occasion when returning from a field day, he formed the corps into square, and desired a young officer to step to the front."

"Noo, Maister G—t, I hear ye hae been telling your friends o' the 42nd, that I wear a turned coat. Weel, I do wear a turned coat, and a vara guid ane it is, and that ye may all see; but, ye maligner, ye forgot to tell ye're friends o' the 'Black Watch,' that I've a bran new one at hame, never worn,

and to satisfy ye and them, I'll put it on next Sabbath day."

The following good story is told of him, when a subaltern at Gibraltar. He was one day on guard with another officer, who unfortunately fell down a precipice four hundred feet high, and was killed. Now my non-military readers should understand that, in the guard reports, there is a small addendum, viz.: "N.B. Nothing extraordinary since guard mounting." The meaning of which is that, in case anything particular should occur, the officer commanding the guard is bound to mention it. Our friend, however, said nothing about the accident that had occurred to his brother officer; and some hours after, the brigade-major came to his quarters, on the part of the officer commanding, with the report in his hand, to demand an explanation. The brigade-major addressing him, said, "You say, Sir, in your report, 'N.B. Nothing extraordinary since guard mounting,' when your brother officer, on duty with you, has fallen down a precipice, four hundred feet high, and been killed."

"Weel, Sir," replied B—. "I dinna think there's ony thing extraordinary in it ava; if he'd faun doon a precipice four hundred feet high, and *no been killed*, I should ha'e thought it vary extraordinary indeed, and wad ha'e put it down in my report."

I fancy the brigade-major's hair must have stood on end while he listened to this cool reply.

This man was also a firm, determined soldier, and one of his last acts in the West Indies brought him into contact with another most resolute man, the late Sir C. —. The latter was temporary Governor of Trinidad; but B— being senior officer proceeded to the island, and desired Sir C. — to vacate, but he, considering that B— had no right or authority to assume the Governorship, refused to abdicate. The troops in the island, being well aware that B— was the senior officer, were ready to obey his commands, and he accordingly sent an intimation to Sir C. —, "that if he was not off the island in two hours, he would put him on board the brigantine 'Duke of York' in charge of the Grenadier Company of the

Royals." Finding it no use to resist this military force, Sir C. — " caved in," as the Yankees say, and the dour Scot remained " cock of the walk." B— died soon after in the West Indies.

CHAPTER II.

REGIMENTAL QUARRELS—SERGEANT TANNER—CLONMEL—TRAGICAL STORY—SCHOOLBOY ESCAPADES—DREAM AND ITS FULFILMENT—TRAVELLING IN IRELAND—ATTEMPTS ON THE LIFE OF MR. DESPARD—ROMAN CATHOLIC SOLDIERS—RASHNESS IN THE USE OF FIRE-ARMS—OBTAIN MY COMMISSION—NEWRY—JACK B—— AND HIS DOG CRAB—REGIMENTAL ODDITIES—HARE, THE EDINBURGH MURDERER—UNJUST SENTENCE—BURKE AND DAFT JAMIE.

MY early years were passed alternately in Scotland and Ireland. In the former we generally spent the Summer at Saltcoats, in Ayrshire, where myself and the late lamented Lord Eglinton were often engaged in boyish play on the sandy shore, a circumstance which in after years, when we were both almost middle-aged men, his Lordship had not forgotten.

One of my earliest recollections appertains to Chatham Barracks, where a fight took place

between the townspeople and Marines on the one side, and the 71st Highland Light Infantry and my father's regiment on the other. Some of the Marines, I believe, were killed, and numbers on both sides wounded. The row commenced by some of the sea soldiers attacking our big black drummer, negroes in those days being often employed in the band. The Marines and townspeople absolutely besieged the barrack gate, and I well remember the wild cries of the Scotch and Irish lads of the two regiments to be let out at them; but the gate was guarded by the officers with drawn swords, to prevent the men breaking out. Poor old Brevet-Colonel L——e, who commanded our Grenadiers, and who in appearance was a perfect type of Don Quixote, cast many a grim and wicked look over the wall at the besiegers, and I doubt not would have liked nothing better than to have led an attack upon them. After some days the riot was quelled, and our regiment ordered to Ireland. A strong and lasting friendship was established from this time between the 71st and ourselves, so much so that when the Highlanders, some

years after, were ordered to Richmond Barracks, Dublin, where my father's regiment was stationed, a general invitation was sent to them by our men, and the day they arrived turning out very wet, dry clothes of every description, besides a good dinner, were provided for everyone of these gallant allies. A bloody feud broke out in Dublin between the Highland and Irish regiments on one side, and the Guards and 19th, an English regiment on the other. One night, after a general engagement, the guard-room at the Castle was filled with prisoners of the different corps above mentioned. Our men happened to be on guard that day. The sergeant of the said guard, named Tanner, was a nice lad, and a thorough Paddy. In the morning, when the escorts of the different regiments arrived for their prisoners, it was found that those of the 71st and ours had mysteriously disappeared, and only Guards and men of the 19th remained. When the captain of the guard and himself were summoned to the police office to give some evidence relative to the row, Tanner, going up to his officer and saluting him with the gravest of faces, said,

"Captain Dalgety, yer honour, is there anything parthicular ye would wish me to swear to?" Captain D. looked in his face perfectly astonished, but not a muscle moved, and he was perfectly unable to make out whether the man was more fool than rogue. Knowing Master Tanner pretty well, I should like to have had a bet upon the matter.

When my father was stationed at Duncannon Fort, in the County Waterford, we saw on the opposite coast, one night, a large house burning, and were told afterwards it was the scene of that dreadful murder called "the burning of the Sheas." The house was set on fire, and every soul in it burned to death, except one little boy. A number of men were hanged for this fearful act, principally through the instrumentality of a magistrate named Despard, of whom more anon.

In the year 1825, when the regiment was stationed at Clonmel, there occurred a dreadful tragedy, in which poor Fred Close and Miss Grubbe were the unfortunate victims. How well I recollect Fred, dressed in his uniform as Lieut. of the Light Company,

and a more elegant, handsome, and powerful young fellow was seldom to be met with. In disposition he was kind and warm-hearted; and a very pretty girl was Miss Grubbe, belonging to a respectable Quaker family. I have often seen her, and been patted on the head by her little hands when taken into the shop by Fred. The story has often been related before, but the repetition of it by one who was present when the sad affair took place, may still interest the reader. The lovers had often met in secret, and it was said that Close had received repeated warnings that, if he continued these clandestine meetings, his life would not be safe.

After this, he always carried a small dirk with him when he went out at night, but he is not known to have said a word about these warnings to any of his friends, for even Heffernan, who was his servant at the time, and some years afterwards became mine, knew nothing of them. One dark night he went out, it is supposed, to meet the hapless girl, and was never again seen alive.

For some days it was thought they had eloped, as the distressed family had been to

the barracks, to see if anything was known about Miss Grubbe, and, as Close was also absent, the supposition was a most natural one. I remember the Adjutant, poor Dolman, a wild harem-scarem fellow, two or three nights after they were missing, coming out of the mess-room rather elevated, and while the tattoo was playing, going up to the drum-major and telling him to play "Merrily danced the Quaker's wife," in allusion to the supposed elopement.

Fears, however, began at last to be entertained that some fatality had taken place, and, strange to say, I dreamt one night that the body of Close, with his hat, was found on the banks of the river Suir. I told my dream at breakfast next morning, and, strange as the coincidence may appear, two days afterwards the hat was found in the very place I had imagined in my dream.

After the Suir had been repeatedly dragged, the body of Miss Grubbe was taken up, with no marks of violence visible; and about one hundred paces below the place where she was discovered, the body of poor Fred Close

was also found, with a large bruise upon the forehead. No stain rested on the reputation of Miss Grubbe, for the medical men declared the unfortunate girl to be as pure as on the day when she was born. The dirk carried by Close was picked up in a field about forty yards from the river. More than one must have been concerned in the horrid deed to have overpowered a man like him, famous for his strength and agility. It was thought by some that Close, offering her outrage, Miss Grubbe had flung herself into the water, and that, in trying to save her, both had been drowned; but this supposition was negatived by the circumstance that the dirk was found so far from the river.

Several people were suspected to be the authors of this horrible crime; among the rest a man who kept the canteen in the barracks, and who, they said, had been rejected by Miss Grubbe, and had been heard to vow vengeance against Close. But nothing ever came of it. If murder had really been committed, no murderer was ever discovered, though Close's family, rich merchants in Manchester, offered high rewards for the dis-

covery of the criminal. Some few months after I joined the army, in 1828, I read in the *Limerick Chronicle* that a man had confessed to being one of the principals in the murder, but the matter died away, and the dread secret will in all probability remain untold until the great day when all secrets shall be revealed.

Heffernan would cry like a child when talking to me of his poor English master. Close was a great favourite, not only with him, but with the men of the regiment, and particularly his own Light Bobs, so much so, that they could hardly be restrained from committing outrages in the town, and, in consequence, the corps was at once marched to Buttevant, in the County Cork.

While in Clonmel, I was sent to the celebrated school kept by Dr. Bell, well-known in the South of Ireland, from which, being a bad boy, I ran away, and had very nearly reached the village of Mullinahone, where a relation was on detachment; but I was ignominiously seized, and brought back a prisoner. I was obliged to walk the whole way, and was pretty well done up on my

return, twenty Irish miles being a very fair trudge for a boy of thirteen.

On my second trip to Mullinahone I had an adventure that frightened me not a little. Having by good behaviour retrieved my character, after my running away, I was allowed to spend a week at that place with my relation, Captain Holland; and Mr. Despard, a magistrate living there, was asked to bring me with him in his gig from Clonmel, where he had gone upon business. Mr. Despard was one of the most resolute and determined magistrates in the County of Tipperary, and had been instrumental in hanging several of the men who perpetrated the brutal murder of the Sheas mentioned by me before. The only boy saved from the burning was then in his house, having been reared by Mr. Despard since the death of his parents.

We accordingly started for Mullinahone, and when within a few hundred yards of Kiltinan, a country seat belonging to a gentleman named Cooke, Mr. Despard suddenly exclaimed, "Willie, watch that man behind the hedge, he is going to fire at me,"

at the same time endeavouring to get out his pistols. You may imagine the terror I was in, when I looked up and saw a man, about twenty yards off, taking aim at the gig with a gun at his shoulder. He pulled the trigger, but the gun mercifully missed fire. Despard then fired at him, but missed, and the fellow bolted like a racehorse across the fields, to my entire satisfaction. To pursue him was out of the question, as Mr. Despard was about eighteen stone in weight, and it was not likely that I should attempt it. Considering it dangerous to continue our journey, we drove up to Kiltinan, a very beautiful place, where we remained all night with the hospitable owner. Next morning, we continued the journey, and arrived safely at our destination, although I was not very easy in my mind, and kept a sharp look out when going through suspicious places.

On entering the village of Mullinahone, Mr. Despard, pointing to a small cabin, said, "The man that attempted to fire at me lives there, his name is Ryan, and it will not be long before he tries again, but I'll

hang him yet." Before my departure from Mullinahone, in less than a week, Mr. Despard was again fired at in his shrubbery and narrowly escaped, the door he was entering being perforated with swan shot. He rushed out immediately and returned the fire; but although blood was traced for a long way, the would-be assassin escaped. My fellow-traveller complimented me on my coolness in this affair, but he little guessed what a funk I was in, or the anxiety with which I endeavoured to screen myself behind his portly person. The house was like an arsenal, five or six policemen constantly living with him. I afterwards heard that, notwithstanding his heroic courage and determination, Mr. Despard was ultimately obliged to leave the country, and settle in England, but I never heard whether he had contrived before doing so to hang his friend Ryan of the cabin.

After remaining at Buttevant for some months, the regiment was ordered to the West Indies, and embarked at Cork, my father being left in command of the depôt. We were then sent to Roscrea in Tipperary,

where, on the occasion of the death and burial of the Commander-in-chief—the Duke of York—the clergyman notified to my father that a funeral sermon would be preached on the following Sunday. The soldiers of the depôt were almost to a man Roman Catholics; and my father, a most liberal person as to religion, on the parade, before the Church and Chapel parties were separated, addressed them as follows—I was standing by his side at the time—"I do not in any way wish to interfere with your religious observances, you have known me too long to think I would. The Duke of York, your late commander-in-chief, is dead; the many acts of kindness shown by him to the army lately under his command, have long given him most deservedly the title of the "soldier's friend." In the Protestant church to-day, a funeral sermon respecting him is to be preached; if any of you would like to hear that sermon, and think it not inconsistent with your religious views to do so, I shall be happy to see you at the church."

The effect of this simple address was such

that every Roman Catholic soldier on the parade went to hear the sermon, and every man the following Sunday was cursed from the altar by the priest for doing so.

I was sent to study mathematics with a clergyman, the Rev. Mr. Hamilton, who lived a little way outside the town. Two attempts had been made to assassinate this gentleman, and loaded fire-arms were consequently kept in the house. He was a very kind, indulgent man, and allowed his pupils to take some of the fowling-pieces and amuse themselves with them in their idle hours. In consequence of this liberty I was very nearly shooting a fellow-pupil, and managed to bring down an old woman. One day I had taken a gun, and, after shooting for a short time, returned and placed it in my bed-room. Next morning a young pupil, named Dancer, and myself were in the room, when in jest I took up the piece and several times pointed it at him. It was God's mercy I did not pull the trigger, or the poor boy's days in this world would have been over. Looking out of the window, I saw an old woman in a red cloak

passing up the road; I suddenly pointed the gun at her, saying what a fine shot she would make. I pulled the trigger, when to my horror off went the gun, smash went all the windows, and, on the other side of the pathway in the mud, a figure in a scarlet cloak lay sprawling, and shouting as loud as she could. "Och, ye murthering villain, ye've kilt me, ye've kilt me." I was so terrified I could scarcely stir from the spot, but, on seeing Mr. Hamilton and the servants rush out to the woman's assistance, I bolted out of a back window, started for the country and hid in a wood, and was so afraid that I did not return on that night. I summoned courage, however, to do so next morning, and found that the old lady had been taken to the hospital with five swan shot in her leg. My governor had ultimately to pay fifteen or twenty pounds for my pot at "ould Biddy Tiernan." It seems Mr. Hamilton, finding the gun unloaded, had reloaded it. It was a lesson to me ever afterwards not to play with fire-arms, more especially as twice in my life was I nearly falling a victim myself to

the same inexcusable carelessness in others.

I was now sent to Scotland, where I remained until I was gazetted to a commission in my father's regiment, when I had just completed my fifteenth year. In person I was very small and slight, certainly not looking my age by at least two years.

I joined the depôt of my corps at Newry in the North of Ireland. A few years previous I had been at school there, kept by a Dr. Henderson, among my companions at whose academy were John Mitchell of revolutionist renown, and I believe, although I cannot recollect him, the present John Martin, M.P.

Well do I recollect the first day I put on the blue coat, tall chako, and sash of an officer, and strutted down town. It would have been better if I had remained at home, for it turned out the most miserable day I think I ever experienced. The people all looked out to see the "weeney officer," and the women particularly were very lavish in their remarks, "Och, the puir wee crater, it's at his mammy's apron strings he should be." "Ah, now come here and give me a

kiss, ye sma' darling," shouted out a virago coming up to me, and despite my resistance, taking me up in her strong arms and ravishing what I felt too indignant to grant. I was mortally offended, but at length managed to get away from these amazons, and headed towards the bridge as you enter the town, for I had previously been in the outskirts. Sitting on the bridge were two powerful country fellows, and as I passed, one of them, looking at me with the most perfect contempt, said to his comrade, "Arrah, Denis, much good that pinkeen would be if the Frinch were to come."

This filled my cup of misery to the brim, I could hardly conceal my tears, and turning round made for the barracks, whose shelter I never left for nearly a month, except at night.

But my annoyances did not cease here. If I went to the theatre (Newry could boast of one then, although it does not at present), some awful voice from the gallery would shout out, "Look at the King's hard bargain, it's aisy seen how our money goes. Go hame to yere mammy, my little dear,

sure it's a lassie ye are. Faith, and it's badly off we are for soldiers." My life was almost a burden to me. They little thought that a very few years would turn that slight delicate-looking boy into a twelve-stone youth, measuring forty-two inches round the chest, and who could have thrashed any two of them.

How few, very few of those who were at the depôt are now alive, I think only one besides myself. Those who were middle-aged are long since dead, and the two yet on this earth are fast getting old men. Poor Jack B——t, one of the finest-looking fellows in the British Army, was a most perfect pugilist, but, in consequence of a fatal fight in his early years with a tinker at Maldon, he would never even put on the gloves. He was the kindest-hearted and best-tempered commanding officer I ever served under, and died when little over forty, after the extraction of a tooth; he caught cold on the outside of a coach and died of lock-jaw in a few hours, lamented by all.

I never saw him in a passion but once.

He had a favourite dog called Crab, and one fair day in Derry, the mess-house being in the town, Master Crab began to fight with a farmer's dog in the street. B——t looked out of the window, and saw the farmer cruelly kicking Crab. He ran down stairs, rushed at the man, who was a stout-looking fellow, and shaking his fist in his face, said, "You infernal scoundrel, I'll give you ten pounds to fight me for ten minutes." The countryman looked at him and retorted, "Ye're a blaguard, sur;" and scanning B——t's gigantic proportions he added, "And by J——s, what's more, ye're a powerful blaguard too." Poor Jack burst out laughing, and retreated with Crab into the mess.

And poor L. G——t, the poetical Scotchman, you also are gone. Good, simple, kind-hearted fellow, who fancied he was a poet, and certainly he was, but a very bad one. Almost everything he said was rhyme of some kind, or intended for it. I recollect, on one occasion, some men of his company were confined for absence, smashing furniture, and bringing naughty women

into barracks. L—— sent in a most remarkable account of the misdoing of two of these men.

"Private Denis Sullivan and Michael Hanlon confined."

"For being out after hours,
For breaking open doors,
And bringing in ——"

His poetry was all in broad Scotch, and I shall never forget the commanding officer's roar of laughter when he read this amazing effort of L——'s genius in the orderly-room.

Another character was Owen. A more perfect Paddy I never met. One of our youngsters, A. C——, still alive, wore a wig, and the first night Owen joined from the wilds of Connaught, he was strangely attracted by the appearance of C——'s hair, and during dinner kept his eyes on C——, who sat opposite to him the whole time, gazing curiously at his head.

The cloth had been removed some little time when Owen, addressing C—— across the table said, "Ah, Mr. C——, will ye let me look at that thrinket ye wear on the top of your head." C——, one of the

wildest fellows in the service, pulled off his wig and shied it at Owen, who examined it as if it was the greatest curiosity in the world, and then returned it without a smile on his face. Certainly he never could have seen one before, for he looked with amazement upon C——'s bald head.

I recollect him years after rushing into the mess-room when Amato won the Derby. "Hooro, boys," said he, "Amato's won the Derby, and what's most extraordinary, he never won it before." C——, finding a toothbrush was a stranger to him, sent him one with his compliments and directions how to use it, and received back a letter of thanks. Poor Owen has lain in an Indian grave for the last thirty years.

Poor old Major K——y was another oddity who afforded us great ammsement. He was rarely sober after ten o'clock P.M., and would then assert with the utmost gravity that either King William of glorious memory, or Bishop Walker, the defender of Derry, was his great-grandfather, he was not sure which. He was wounded in the seat of honour during the Peninsular war, and

would insist upon showing the wound, particularly to strangers, if any were present. He was a very handsome gentlemanly man, and died only a few years ago. Notwithstanding his love for the bottle, he must have died a very aged man. It is a strange thing that, notwithstanding the long time he was in the regiment, he never joined the head-quarters.

My uncle also, poor old Major B——, was another character. About five feet four in height, he weighed nearly seventeen stone, and had a horse almost seventeen hands high, which he always mounted by a ladder. He had the unfortunate defect of stuttering very much in his speech. I recollect once at Light Infantry drill the bugle sounding to lie down. All did so except B——. The major commanding sent the sergeant-major to him to know why he did not obey orders. "Tell the ma-major," was the stuttering reply, "that if-if-if I once l-l-lie down, by G-God, I'd never get up again."

Our major was a very smart officer, much liked by the whole regiment, and, having great *esprit de corps*, paid much attention to

the dress and appearance of the men. He issued a book of "Regimental Orders, Rules, and Regulations." I recollect one was, "And every soldier out of barracks shall carry a switch, and walk as a soldier of an Irish regiment." One day, inspecting the barrack rooms, he observed on a bed a stick about the size of a young tree. Peering at it closely, he turned to the soldier and said, "My good man, what do you call this?"

"Plaze yer honour," replied the soldier, "that's the little bit of a switch we're ordered to walk with."

"Oh, indeed."

And all are gone save C——r and myself.

I have now a curious coincidence to relate. A little before this time the horrid murders perpetrated by Burke and Hare in Edinburgh had taken place. It was a case in which two brothers were at the same time shedding blood and taking life, one in the execution of his duty as a good soldier, the other in the performance of acts that will stamp him as one of the most cowardly, blood-thirsty murderers that ever disgraced the human species. For two or three years my father had a

soldier-servant named Patrick Hare, a quiet, honest, well-conducted man. I recollect his mother, a weird, solemn-looking old woman, coming to see him once or twice from the north of Ireland.

Patrick Hare was the brother, and this old woman the mother, of William Hare, the notorious Edinburgh assassin. In 1827 my father, being stationed at Dundalk, had papers of some official importance to send to Newry, a distance of about eleven miles. Hare, who had been selected to take them, had proceeded about half way on his journey, when he went into a public-house to get some refreshment. Several countrymen who were there entered into conversation with him, and finally demanded his despatches. Hare, a powerful young fellow, jumped upon a table, drew his bayonet, and said he would send it through the first man who attempted to take them. A man named Cunningham upon this made a rush at him, and receiving the bayonet through his heart, dropped dead. The others, intimidated, allowed Hare to escape; but he gave himself up to the civil authorities, when he was tried and acquitted.

"Justifiable homicide" was the verdict returned by the jury.

About eight or nine months after I joined the depôt it was ordered to Derry. We had been there a few days when, being officer of the day, I had in my tour of duty to visit the jail-guard in the city. On doing so the sergeant (O'Neill) reported to me that they had taken a countryman prisoner. It appears the man had forced himself on the sentry's post close to the walls of the prison, and, on being ordered off, had refused to go, and began to abuse the soldier. The sentry upon this came to the charge, when the man, suddenly seizing the bayonet, wrenched it off the musket, and ran down the street with it. The soldier, afraid to leave his post, shouted, "Guard turn out!" Among them was Hare, who, taking his bayonet, pursued the fellow, and ordered him to give up his comrade's weapon. The man refused, and stood upon his defence in the doorway of a house, where several passes with the bayonet took place between him and Hare.

The countryman, being slightly wounded, and seeing the other men coming up, sur-

rendered, and was taken to the jail, where he was placed in a cell until he could be brought before a magistrate in the morning. I told the sergeant to send for the warder, that I might see the prisoner, to enable me to make my report of the circumstances next day. On going to the cell, to our horror we found the poor fellow as dead as Julius Cæsar. On medical examination, it was discovered that Hare's bayonet had penetrated deeply into the man's side, and that he had bled inwardly to death.

The surprise of everyone was very great when Sergeant O'Neil, Hare, and two other men of the guard were given over to the civil power, tried for manslaughter, and each sentenced to six months imprisonment. A more unjust and absurd sentence could not have been pronounced, particularly that of O'Neil, a most respectable, deserving non-commissioned officer, afterwards sergeant-major of the regiment, who, for merely being in command of the guard, received this severe sentence. However, the military authorities interfered, and, after a short confinement, the men were all released.

During the time Hare was in prison his infamous relation, having turned king's evidence, and hanged his accomplice Burke, came over to Ireland to see his brother, but the people happened in some way to hear of his intended visit, and were preparing to give him so warm a reception in his native town (he was a Derry man), that he thought it wiser to defer making his appearance until some other time. Our Hare came out of prison a broken, down-hearted man, and his brother's atrocities, combined with his own misfortune in having unfortunately taken the lives of two men preying upon his mind, he died of a rapid consumption a few months afterwards. His notorious brother was, I believe, murdered in America—lynched, I think. Colonel Knox, of Prehen, Derry, told me that Burke served seven years as his servant in the Donegal Militia, and was a quiet, sober, inoffensive man. How men will change!

I recollect "Daft Jamie," one of the victims, when I was a boy in Scotland. A stout, powerful fellow he was, and gave both Burke and Hare enough to do, but after a long resistance they murdered him.

CHAPTER III.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN FORMER TIMES—FINE SOLDIER RUINED—FLOGGING IN SOME CASES A BENEFIT—THE TOSS UP—AN EXCELLENT MEMORY—SUBSCRIPTION CLUB—MICKIE NOONAN—KERRY LIGHT COMPANY—PRESENCE OF MIND—LONDONDERRY—A DRAG PARTY IN THE OLDEN TIME—SCOTLAND—WHISTLING ON THE SABBATH DAY—BUTTEVANT—FEAT OF MEMORY — SIDLEY, THE ADJUTANT — PEDESTRIAN FEAT — SERGEANT MACPHERSON — ORDERED TO THE WEST INDIES.

I HAD not joined the depôt more than a few days, when a corporal punishment parade took place. It was a dark cloudy morning, the soldiers were formed into square on a secluded part of the drill ground, in the centre of which the triangles were erected. The drummers were standing in a row on each side of them, with the sergeant-major (whose duty it was to call the number of lashes,) and the medical officer, close to the halberds.

The prisoner was then marched in. A

finer-looking lad—or boy you might call him—I had seldom looked at. In height he must have been at least six feet three—very slight, yet muscular, and could not have been more than eighteen or nineteen years of age.

His court-martial was read by the adjutant, and what think you, military readers, you that in the present day hesitate about giving fifty lashes to an incorrigible blackguard, was this lad's crime? "For being absent from tattoo, and not returning to barracks until five o'clock the next morning." Guilty. To receive a corporal punishment of three hundred lashes on his bare back.* And he did receive them—every lash. For a time he bore the torture without a groan, but at length strength and nature gave way, and he uttered feeble cries for mercy and agonising moans until the end of the horrid scene. Many of the recruits, and two of the young officers, lately joined, fainted at the agonising spectacle, and were carried out of the square. Horrified although I was, it had not the same effect upon me. Many

* Since this was written "corporal punishment" has been done away with.

scenes of the same description have I since seen; in fact, they were at least of weekly recurrence. In this instance what was the consequence? This lad, who with proper treatment and due allowance for his boyish folly, might have turned out a glorious soldier, hardly ever did another day's duty. After remaining a long time in hospital, he came out and deserted the following day, but was shortly afterwards apprehended, when he was tried and sentenced again to receive three hundred lashes.

As in all my long experience I never witnessed a similar scene, I will relate it as it occurred. The second punishment took place in Londonderry, about six months afterwards. Richard Dowd, for that was his name, was marched into the square. He tried to keep himself firm and erect, but evidently, from some cause, could not do so. His tall slight figure and boyish face excited the compassion of everyone. While the court-martial was being read, I saw him convey something to his mouth, and before the reading had finished he became apparently perfectly insensible. The medical

man felt his pulse, and spoke to the commanding officer. The prisoner's jacket and shirt were then taken off, and the triangles being stretched upon the ground, Dowd was laid on them and securely tied, when they were again raised up, and the punishment commenced. Not a moan or a groan escaped him; but from time to time the doctor went up and felt his pulse, nodded to the senior officer, and he received every lash of his sentence. By not even a quiver of the flesh would you have imagined the man was alive, and yet his pulse must have beat with some regularity, or the doctor, who is responsible, would not have dared to allow the torture to go on.

I never could properly understand what had occasioned the almost instantaneous stupor, though it must probably have been some very strong narcotic, something of the nature of the chloroform now used. The men told me it was tobacco juice, and that he had been taking it in small quantities all night.

Dowd was a very long time before he recovered, but two or three days after he came

out of hospital, he again deserted, and, I heard, got off safely to America.

I was present at an incident that took place not long after poor Dowd's first flogging, and I have often thought how humiliating it must have been to the officer concerned. Adam Burnett was one of the most splendid specimens of an old soldier I ever beheld, so much so that the late Sir C. Grant, seeing him on sentry one day at the Castle in Dublin, rode up to Richmond Barracks, where the regiment was stationed, to learn his history. He was nearly six feet five in height, and, strange to say, had a slight squint and reddish hair; but, notwithstanding these natural drawbacks, his figure, carriage, and appearance as a soldier I have never seen equalled. Adam was a Scotchman, and certainly a "ne'er-do-weel;" for, having a fair education, he might have been a colour-sergeant over and over again, but he was too fond of his liquor, and when drunk became an insubordinate, violent fellow, who required half a sub-division to take him to the guard-room, so great was his strength; though, when sober, a more

civil obliging soldier was not in the ranks. This besetting fault, however, had several times brought him to the halberts.

Adam had now completed his twenty-one years service, and was about to retire into private life; in fact, the board for his discharge was in orders, when, unfortunately, the evening before he happened to take a "wee drappie" too much, and on his way home to the barracks from the town, he met one of our officers, named O——, a nasty cranky little fellow, and endeavoured to salute him; but it must have been a very staggering attempt, for the officer, in a pet, turned round and said, "You are drunk; go to the guard-house." Burnett replied in an insolent manner, and O—— sent in a serious charge against him. Several of the officers, knowing Burnett was to be discharged in a day, interceded for him, for he was a great favourite, and the show-man of the depôt, and begged O—— not to pursue the matter; but he was inflexible, and old Adam, on the eve of his discharge, was tried by court-martial, and sentenced to three hundred lashes. I was present at the infliction of

this punishment, which he took without saying a word. When it was over, he put on his shirt, and marched out of the square, but suddenly stopped before O——, who was at the head of his company, drew himself up to the full extent of his magnificent height, saluted him, and, in his broad Scotch, said, "Maister O——, I hope you're perfectly satisfied?" His look of contempt I can never forget, nor the humiliating figure cut by the officer. A kind of satisfactory buzz ran through the ranks. I afterwards heard that old Adam had perfectly reformed, and was a sergeant of police either in Edinburgh or Aberdeen.

Military men of the present time—I mean those who have not been many years in the army—will scarcely credit the scenes I have related, and yet mine was not the real flogging time of twenty years before; yet what I am now about to relate will, I think, almost come up to anything that ever took place in the more olden period.

I once saw two men sent off parade in Londonderry for having dirty trousers on. These men were brought into the orderly-

room the same day, and a shilling was put into one of their hands. The shilling was thrown up, Private Daniel Macaravy lost the toss, and the same evening received two hundred lashes. I'll engage the winner did not neglect to have clean trousers on the next parade. I do not wonder if my readers should say, "Good God, could such things have been!" From that time I made a vow that, as long as I remained in the army, I would do all that in me lay to save the poor soldier from the lash, and I kept my resolution, for many a bare back has been preserved by my instrumentality, as will be seen by-and-by.

I had often mentioned at the mess, and in conversation among my brother-officers of the present day, the above story relative to Daniel Macaravy and his dirty trousers, and I could see that in general they thought the colonel was romancing with the privilege of an old veteran, when, one day at Aldershot, an old soldier named Tom Nugent, who had been many years discharged from the regiment, and for whom I had managed to get a situation near Woolwich, came over to see

me at the camp. My adjutant, now Lieut.-Colonel Duncan Stuart, late 92nd Higlanders, happened to be in my hut at the time of the old man's visit, and, having an extraordinary good memory, I recollected that he must have been at the depôt in Derry when the circumstance I have narrated occurred.

"Tom," quoth I, "do you recollect Dan Macaravy being flogged for having dirty trousers on parade at Derry?"

"Troth do I, your honour," replied Tom; "and more, by token, Jamie Dean, the mess-waiter, was flogged the next morning for not bringing the carving knife to the mess sergeant."

I need not say my credit was saved, and the adjutant went forth a believer.

It has often been a puzzle to me how, in those days, we ever managed to get soldiers, but we certainly did, and splendid soldiers also; but there is a very great difference as to education within the last thirty years. When I first entered the army not one in twenty recruits could read or write, and now fifteen out of twenty can either do one or the other. Now, to be a non-commissioned officer a man requires to be well up

in reading, writing, and arithmetic. I recollect that for many years the light company of my regiment was paid by a colour-sergeant, an Englishman, named Temporly, who could neither read nor write, and yet his memory was so excellent that he seldom or never made a mistake. The improvement in the army is certainly in every way very great, and I attribute it in a measure to the abolition of corporal punishment to the extent it has been; and yet I would never altogether do away with it.* I never hesitate to flog a thief, and I never knew the men to pity one who was punished for that crime. On board ship it is necessary for the commanding officer, supported by his officers, to have the power of corporal punishment, and also, in extreme cases, on the line of march; but this is all very different from the gross and cruel abuse of it that I have witnessed.

I have heard many people say that a British soldier did not care for flogging, and felt no shame on account of it, and that when the pain and punishment were over he thought no more about it. I will grant that when I

* This was written before it was done away with.

first entered the service—and even then, from all I have heard, it was not carried to the excess it had been twenty years before—the soldier did not feel a great shame in being flogged. It was such a customary occurrence, happening almost every morning and evening, and for such trivial offences, that the victims only gloried in bearing the punishment, as they said, "like men," and for years after I became an officer, and while this degrading and disgraceful system still existed, the men in my regiment had in each company a "subscription club," which, if a man took his two or three hundred lashes, or whatever the punishment might be, without giving tongue, gave him three or four pounds. If, on the contrary, he gave tongue, he would, in all probability, get so good a thrashing from his comrades as would sometimes have the effect of sending him into hospital again. And with what fortitude I have seen them bear this agonising torture. I recollect two very little men, named McAdorey and Cummesky, who received five hundred lashes each, and coolly counted every lash themselves.

I have seen a little red-headed fellow, named Mickie Noonan, after getting his three hundred, turn round to old Mac and say, "Thank yer honour. If ye'll give me a bottle of rum I'll take the same over again." What a dreadful system that could thus degrade human beings far below the level of brute beasts! I have heard from my father of men whose backs were so lacerated by repeated punishments that they could no longer bear flogging, and had to receive the lash on the breech, or even on the calves of their legs. One man named Cooke, of his own regiment, while being flogged on the calves, cried out, "Now, ye ——, there's the soles of my feet for you left."

Three men of my father's corps, the 67th, were sentenced at the Cape of Good Hope to receive one thousand lashes each for the crime of mutiny. One man took, without flinching, the whole of the lashes awarded, and walked away from the triangles unassisted. The others only received three or four hundred, when they were taken down by the medical men.

I remember standing with some officers of

another regiment one day when the subject of flogging came upon the *tapis*. After different opinions had been given, one of them, who had previously remained silent, said, "Well, gentlemen, you may all say this, or say that, but I was never worth a d—n as a soldier until I got three hundred," and walked away. Some people have curious tastes. The officer in question, I need hardly say, had risen from the ranks.

A story is told that during the war when the Irish Militia were called out, every man in the Light Company of the "Kerry" had been flogged with one exception. This man was so stung by the upbraidings of his comrades on the subject, that he went to the captain and implored him, "for the love of the Virgin, to get the colonel to flog him, or he'd never have pace in the company."

How different is the behaviour of regiments in the present day from what it was upwards of forty years ago! When I first joined in the West Indies, by twelve o'clock in the day the guard-room was crammed with drunken men, cursing, fighting, &c. At Barbadoes we had two men killed, and many

were taken off to hospital severely hurt; some of them were injured for life. The scenes that took place were horrible to contemplate. The halberts were in constant use, but the daily sight of punishment, so far from improving the men, only rendered them more reckless and despairing.

During my six years' service in the West India Islands, six of our men were hanged for murdering their comrades.

In the present day it is a rarity to see a soldier drunk in the day time, and even at night the number is wonderfully small. Yet the regiment I have spoken of, once about the worst-behaved in the service, has for many years been considered one of the best, serious crime of any description being almost unknown. Indeed, their court-martial returns, &c., were so very few that the Horse-Guards deputed, in 1853, the late Lord Frederick Fitzclarence, Commander-in-chief in Bombay, to make a most rigid inspection of the defaulter sheets, which resulted in a report that perfectly satisfied the authorities as to the great good conduct of the corps.

The liquor in the West Indies, the frightful rum produced there, made the men perfectly mad, and, in some instances, soldiers were killed by their comrades without the slightest malice. One man saved his life by his coolness and great presence of mind. He was cleaning his belts outside the barrack-room, when another soldier, infuriated with rum, rushed up to him, and presenting his musket, said, "I'm going to shoot you." "Oh, damn it!" said the other, "don't shoot me, don't you see I'm for guard." "Well, I'll shoot some one else," replied the madman, rushing into the barrack-room, and the report of the musket soon followed, when it was found he had shot another man through the body.

Another man, named Jerry Timmons, a smart clean soldier, of whom more anon, loaded his musket in front of the guard-house, and called out to the sentry at the door to stand out of the way, as he was going to take a pot shot into the guard-room. The sentry wisely obeyed the order, when Timmons fired, and shot through the heart a man named O'Flaherty, who was lying

asleep on the guard bed. I could relate many other instances of the frightful effect of that deadly poison, "new rum," on the European soldier in the islands.

A rather singular coincidence has just occurred. I had finished writing the circumstances above mentioned relative to the two soldiers, Dowd and Macaravy, when, taking a walk into town, I observed standing at a shop window a man whose face I thought I knew. On going up to him, I found it was a discharged soldier of the regiment, named George Harding, who had been pensioned now upwards of twenty-six years, but I perfectly remembered him, as we had joined the depôt together, and been drilled in the same squad. I asked him if he recollected what I had stated about the two men, and he said he was present on both occasions, and gave me the name of the man who had tossed up with Macaravy—Maguire. He also said the drug with which Dowd was stupefied was tobacco juice, of which he had taken a quantity into the guard-room, before coming on parade. It is certainly curious that, on the very day I had written

my account of this circumstance, I should have met a living evidence of the fact of what occurred forty years ago. This was written in 1867. Harding was a raw Berkshire lad, and was taken as a servant by my uncle. His English accent was a particular amusement to us all, so different from the Irish brogue of the majority of the regiment. Harding is now coachman in a family close to where I live; and two other soldiers who were present at the scenes mentioned, are now living close to me.

CHAPTER V.

DERRY—REVISITED AFTER A LAPSE OF THIRTY-FOUR YEARS —MALINGERING AT PREHEN — A PAIR OF SCOUNDRELS — DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND—A "BRAG PARTY"—EDMUND KEAN— EXTRAORDINARY WAGER—PEDESTRIANISM—A PIOUS OFFICER— IMMORALITY AT BUTTEVANT—VOLUNTEER FOR THE WEST INDIES.

DERRY, dear old Derry, it seems to me but yesterday, when we marched into the ancient town from Newry, that I roamed around your antique walls, where once my ancestors may have walked; for, as I said before, my great-great-great-grandmother was a native of the Maiden City. From that time, a period of thirty-four years elapsed before I visited it again, and then I came in command of armed men, horse and foot, to annihilate the "gallant 'prentice boys," loyal to their Queen and

country. It was, indeed, "Much Ado about Nothing." Again I saw the traitor Lundy hanging from the walls, as he well deserved to be, but I had no occasion to draw blade or pull trigger on my old friends. But where were those whom I had so loved in my youthful days, the happiest I ever spent? Not one remained of the numerous families I had known, and whose homes were always open to the little soldier boy; family after family I inquired for, gone all gone. One old gentleman, indeed, stopped a soldier and said he remembered me, and that was all. Of the family that I almost lived with, the kind hospitable K——s of P——, not one remained.

Well do I recollect sending from P——n to the barracks to say I was so ill as to be unable to return, and the Major despatching the Scotch surgeon to attend me. I was busily engaged with the young ladies at battledore and shuttlecock, when the "gallant Gordon" was unexpectedly seen riding up the avenue. In a moment I was in bed, curtains drawn, and on the medico's arriving, a pitiful tale of my sufferings was

told him by the girls. Whether the douce Scot suspected me or not, I cannot say, but I was told to remain quiet for a couple of days. Quiet I was until after his departure. I remained for three days, and on my return to quarters, the Major told me, with a queer look, "that if I was taken ill there again, he would have to prevent my going to so unhealthy a locality." "A nod is as good as a wink to a blind horse," so I did not try the malingering dodge a second time. The kindness I experienced from that family, in particular, I never shall forget; nor the happy, happy days, I spent among the old woods and in the hospitable mansion of Prehen.

On my late visit, I wandered round it, but had not the heart to knock and ask once more to see the dear old rooms. I was glad to hear, although strangers to me, that a family of the old name still inhabits the old place. Long, long, may it be so!

The belles of the city were certainly the Misses S——d. Four more beautiful girls could seldom be met with; but, alas! they are all grandmothers now. Beautiful Re-

becca C—y, who was much admired by the officers, met with a most melancholy death, having been accidentally killed by her brother at a picnic. To frighten the girls, he flung a large stone from an elevation; it unfortunately struck his sister upon the head and killed her on the spot; poor George C—y, he died soon after. The late lamented Captain Boyd, R.N., drowned in gallantly trying to save life at Kingstown some years ago, and his brother, Lieutenant Boyd, shot by the Spaniard Torrejos, were frequently my guests at mess.

The depôt of the 77th were stationed with us. I recollect one of their sergeants who was seven feet in height, and portly in proportion. He was never allowed to be at drill or parade, as he completely spoilt the appearance of the battalion. While in Derry, I met an officer whom I shall call Grouse, without any exception one of the ugliest men the world ever produced, not more than five feet two in height, I can compare him to nothing but Captain Weazel, that wonderfully-drawn character of Smollett's in "Roderick Random." He had lost part

of his nose and palate, and spoke with the most atrocious snuffle. How he ever got into the service, or was allowed to remain in it, was a mystery to me, not only from his appearance, but from the acts he had been guilty of, and of which he used constantly to boast. Yet this man, so frightful in face and figure, was said to have had immense success with women, and certainly his manner and address to them was very insinuating, although to me everything about him appeared revolting. Totally devoid of principle, he used to relate stories of himself that any other man would be ashamed to speak of; deeds that should have driven him from society of every description, and which, on his own confession, entitled him to a residence on Norfolk Island. A very clever man, he had certain humour and wit that made him an acceptable, though dangerous, companion for the young officers. I have often heard him relate the following episode in his life, and, disgraceful as it was, he seemed to glory in it.

At one period of his service he belonged to

a Cavalry Regiment in India, and, I believe, was stationed at Bangalore, in the Madras Presidency. Grouse was very fond of horse-racing, and a good rider. Another officer of the same regiment and himself subscribed together, wrote home to England, and had a racehorse of the second class (but quite good enough to beat Arabs) sent out to them. The horse arrived, and was trained for the Bangalore races. Grouse's partner, who must have been as great a scoundrel as himself, found out that in the race for which they had backed their own animal, there was a certain Arab horse of great racing quality, and that it would be a matter of doubt whether they could pull off the good thing they intended. However, they determined to leave nothing to chance, but to put it out of the power of the Arab to beat them; and this was the plan they contrived, and brought to a successful termination. I quote Grouse's own words. "We repaired to the race-course just as day was breaking and the hostile nag was taking his morning gallop; placed a rope across the course, and as the horse approached I said to the Major, or the

Major said to me, 'Blast you, pull the rope, and, oh Lord, if you'd seen the horse come down!'" The boy who rode him was killed. There was a great stir about the matter, and although they escaped hanging, they were obliged to leave India and their corps. And the man would tell of this disgraceful villainy with the most unblushing effrontery.

Another story is more amusing, as it was "diamond cut diamond," and, incredible as it may appear, really happened. Grouse was stationed at Clonmel, and in a Dragoon Regiment at Cahir was a gentleman I shall call C——, well-known in those days as a particularly clever fellow in all that related to horseflesh, and if you got the better of him, you had only the devil to beat; but yet he met his match in our respectable friend Grouse. Grouse had a very nice mare, and C—— had a very nice dog-cart, which he tried very hard to exchange for the mare; but each was afraid of the other's well-known abilities, so that they could come to no agreement. One Sunday morning C—— drove over from Cahir, and breakfasted at the mess of the 150th. Nothing was said

until they were smoking their cigars, when C—— broached the subject.

"Well, Grouse, what about the mare? I'll give you forty pounds and the dog-cart for her."

"I must have forty-five pounds," was the answer; but, after some argument, forty pounds was agreed upon.

C—— was delighted, for he thought he had his man upon the hip.

"It's a bargain, Grouse, is it not? No crying off," said C——.

"Certainly not," replied Grouse.

"Well, I'm sorry to tell you," said C——, "that yesterday my black mare kicked the dog-cart into smithereens, and you had better send over to Cahir for the pieces."

"You're just the infernal rogue I thought you," replied the victim; "but come over to the stables and get your mare, and then I'll have nothing more to do with you in future."

Accordingly, accompanied by C——'s groom, they proceeded to the stables.

"Now, my man," said Grouse, "go in and bring out the mare."

The man went in, but quickly came out and said to his horrified master, "The mare's dead, Sir."

"Just so," said Grouse. "About the time your dog-cart was kicked to pieces yesterday, my mare died, so take her body out of this."

Grouse shortly afterwards married a very pretty Quakeress, and died, I heard, a fearful death soon after.

I was once invited in Derry to what they called a "brag party," given by an old maiden lady named S——. On entering the room, I saw three large card tables, at each of which I am sure there could not have been less than twelve or fourteen ladies and gentlemen, the former being greatly in the majority, and from their appearance I should think all the aged and middle-aged spinsters in the city had been collected together. A brother-officer and myself were asked to join the social game. In a weak moment we did so, and, before I knew where I was, they bragged me out of all the money I had in the world, say three pounds ten shillings, and I went home cursing brag and all the old

ladies who had plundered me. I have never tried the pleasant game of brag since.

A more hospitable, kind people than the Derryites could not exist, and we were all much annoyed when the depôt was ordered to Buttevant, in the South of Ireland. Bitter were the tears I shed at parting with my numerous friends.

I obtained three months' leave of absence, and proceeded to Scotland to spend them. I landed in Glasgow on a Sunday night, and when proceeding along the Broomielaw with the porter who carried my baggage, I incautiously began to whistle, but was soon made aware of the frightful sin I had committed, by a policeman coming up to me and saying,

"Laddie, if ye whistle on the Sabbath eve I'll tack ye to the police office."

My pipe was thus put out. "Oh, moral Scotland," many a tale could I tell of your puritanism and piety, but they would not suit the pages of this book.

I spent three most pleasant months in the beautiful Island of Rothesay, in the Isle of Bute. Often have I fished in Loch Fad, and

many pike and perch have I taken out of its waters. One evening, while fishing, a little and as I thought old-looking man came up and entered into conversation with me, as he had previously done on two or three different occasions. He appeared to me a most pleasant conversible person, and on one occasion he asked me into his cottage on the banks of the lake, and introduced me to a most beautiful Jewess-looking lady. I passed a most pleasant evening with them, and was much gratified when I learned that my entertainer was the celebrated tragedian Edmund Kean. Who the lady was, it is unnecessary to say. Kean showed me many curiosities, presents from high notabilities, among the rest a beautiful Turkish sabre, given him by Lord Byron. At this time it was said he drank fearfully, but I can only say that, so far as my knowledge goes, constantly seeing him off and on for nearly three months, I never saw him in the slightest degree inebriated. On my departure from Rothsay, he made me a present of a walking stick with a gold handle, and several other

little things which I value for the sake of the giver.

I now proceeded to join the depôt at Buttevant, in the County Cork. On the night of my arrival at mess, the conversation turned upon memory. I said that I fancied, although I had been three months away, I could tell the name of every non-commissioned officer and soldier in the depôt when I left. Everyone laughed at me, but I took ten to one several times in bottles of wine that I could do it. Sidley, the adjutant, who was famous for his memory, was backed against me. Barrett, who commanded, promised to have every man on parade next morning to decide the bets. The number of men in the depôt was about two hundred and thirty. A minute's time was to be given between the name of each man if required.

I told the name of every man without missing one. A Scotch doctor, who lost some wine on the occasion, took me to the hospital, guards, &c., so that no man should escape; but he was unable to baffle me or save himself. Sidley told the name of every man save one, and, strange to say, that was

his own servant, a lad named Grainger, whose name, for the life of him, he could not recollect.

On the day I completed my seventeenth birthday, I performed a pedestrian feat, that, for a boy of my age, was certainly a good one. I had much increased in height and strength since I had joined in Newry two years before, and although still looking a perfect child, I was no mean adept in all athletic exercises.

The depôts of the 74th and 68th were stationed with us, and it was agreed that a youngster of each regiment should be picked out to run in heavy "marching order" from the barrack gate at Buttevant, to the inn door at Mallow, a distance of more than six Irish miles. Poor George Witham, 68th, Greenwood, 74th, and Theobald, 86th, were the chosen ones. At the last moment Theobald funked, and would not start, and for the honour of the corps I volunteered to take his place, although everyone laughed at a boy of my age carrying such a weight.

The knapsacks were weighed and inspected before starting, by the late Sir M. Creugh,

86th, Colonel Crabb, 74th, and Major Gledstones, 68th.

George Witham, being a noted pedestrian, and twenty-three years of age, was the favourite at any odds. Greenwood, a tall lad of nineteen, was next; but it was any odds against poor little me, although in my own mind I was determined to do or die. I had certainly the sympathy of nearly all, and, when passing through the town, the countrymen would have carried me, if they could.

I must have been very strong, for I did not care for the weight, but made all the running, and managed to get nearly a quarter of a mile ahead. Crowds kept with me, encouraging me to persevere, and I was followed by three mounted officers. When within about two miles of Mallow, I began to feel rather exhausted, which a countryman observing, he rushed up to me with a glass of whisky, and absolutely poured it down my throat. It certainly gave me new strength, and although closely pressed by Greenwood, I succeeded in being the first to gain the inn door at Mallow, but fell senseless before it, beating Greenwood by about twenty yards, and

the favourite by nearly a mile. The time by watch was one hour and ten minutes. When it is remembered that six Irish miles and a little more, is very nearly, if not quite, eight English, and that we carried nearly sixty pounds dead-weight, the performance is not to be sneezed at. I was taken up, put into a hot bath, well rubbed down, and so soon recovered, that after a good dinner we marched back to Buttevant that evening. About twelve o'clock the same night, being sound asleep, I was awoke by bugles blowing, drums beating, and, not knowing what to make of it, was about getting out of bed, when a sergeant of my company came and informed me that the depôt was to march to Doneraile, about five miles off, but that I was not required to go.

This eccentric movement of our Major's created the devil to pay in the country. The neighbouring gentry, disturbed from their slumbers by the beating of drums and blowing of bugles, naturally imagined that the country had risen, and the consternation was fearful. Reports were sent up to Dublin, and I suppose our commanding officer

got it pretty warm from the authorities, as he never attempted the same "divarsion" again, as Paddy says; but an unfortunate officer of the 28th Regiment who shortly after imitated him and alarmed the country people, was tried by a general court-martial, and narrowly escaped losing his commission.

About this time a Lieutenant Roden joined us from the half-pay. He was a man close upon fifty years of age, and a most melodramatic looking person, tall, with large, dark, ugly, cunning eyes, an aquiline nose, a jet black wig, and by no means an attractive person to look at. A few days after he arrived I was asked to breakfast at his quarters. Before commencing our meal, he said, "Have you any objection to read a chapter in the Bible?" Of course I said I had not.

His servant, Reid, was then called in, and our host began to read a chapter; after which I did the same. I thought this was *quantum suff.*, but no, the book was handed to Reid, who managed with considerable difficulty to obey orders; but as he had to spell about every half-dozen words

it was a long time before he had completed his task. A hymn was then given out by our host, and it must have been a treat to hear us singing it, for neither myself nor Reid had the slightest idea of music, and our entertainer's singing was something worse than the howling of a sick dog. Outside the windows were officers and men, grinning and laughing, and what was worst the breakfast was completely spoilt. In my young innocence, I thought what a good worthy pious old gentleman we had got among us; but of all the hypocritical scoundrels I ever came across, this man could have given them weight and won in a canter. Why, B——, the jockey-killer, was an angel of light compared with him, for his acts, bad as they were, were not concealed under the garb of religion.

I believe this man was of a very old Lancashire family; but he had lived for many years in Bermuda, and had been grog-seller, and I believe pirate at times. He entered the army late in life, and was tried by court-martial for something very disgraceful. On his trial he said, addressing the Court,

"You are going to cashier me, but I'll be reappointed in the same Gazette." He was cashiered, and he was reappointed in the same Gazette. His family interest must have been very great, but I believe they then cast him off.

The barracks at Buttevant were infested by numbers of unfortunate women, and the officer of the day, with the orderly sergeant and a couple of men, was directed every night after tattoo to search the passages in the officers' quarters, and turn those discovered outside the gate. We had in the regiment a gigantic Highland sergeant named McPherson, a singular character, and nothing delighted him more than these women hunts. I think I see him now with his long halbert, a kind of spear borne by the sergeants in those days, poking behind the staircases, and at every victim he bagged crying out exultantly, "Mair strumpets, Maister Willie, mair harlots."*

An order having arrived to send a draft to the West Indies, I voluntereed for it,

* For some years the men would call me nothing but "Master Willie."

and took farewell of my kind friends the N—tts of Springfield, whose hospitable board was ever open to the military, and whom I had known when a boy at Buttevant, and also that pattern of a parish priest, Father B——y, who used to be the soul of our mess, and a tip-topper at three card loo. I then marched to Cork, and from thence proceeded to Liverpool *en route* to Barbadoes.

As I am now about to commence my West Indian career, I shall conclude this chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

EMBARKATION AT LIVERPOOL—BIDDY GAFFNEY—OFFICERS ON BOARD THE SHIP "ROBERT"—OUR RELIGIOUS FRIEND—BARBADOES—LUXURIES—EFFECTS OF MOON-BLINDNESS—MALINGERING AND NOT MALINGERING—COCK-FIGHTING—SIR J. LYON—ROMANTIC STORY—BLACK HUGH FRASER—HERCULEAN FEAT—POT-SHOT WITH BOW AND ARROW—BARNEY O'RUARK—DEPARTURE FROM BARBADOES.

ON the 24th October we embarked on board the ship "Robert," Captain Ross, at Liverpool for Barbadoes. Previous to sailing, when about leaving the dock, a tremendous row was heard in the lower part of the ship, and in a short time the mate appeared upon deck, dragging poor Biddy Gaffney, one of our soldiers' wives, and two children after him. Poor Biddy had managed to get over from Cork, and with the assistance of her husband Patrick, and some of the sailors, had been concealed below in hopes

of not being discovered until the transport was at sea. Biddy was a very handsome young Irishwoman, and her husband a splendid-looking soldier. Her anguish was terrible, and it was a pitiable sight to see when the captain ordered her on shore with her young ones. I had four sovereigns left, and, without thinking at the moment of anything but the sad scene, I gave the money to Gaffney for her, and the vessel sailed, leaving Biddy and her children howling on the pier.

Ten days ago (14th October, 1873) while at the United Service Club, I was told that a man wished to see me. When I went out I saw an old soldier-like-looking fellow between seventy and eighty.

"Don't ye know me, Sir?" said he.

"Indeed I do not," I replied.

"Ah, Sir, don't ye recollect the ship 'Robert,' Biddy Gaffney, and the four sovereigns?" At once the circumstance was brought to my mind, and I knew that Private Patrick Gaffney of forty-five years ago stood before me. "Biddy died last month, Sir," said he, "and on her death-bed

told me to find you out; she never forgot you, and what ye did, Sir, and I have now come to see if you can get me into Kilmainham Hospital; my two sons died in the ould corps, and I have no one left." Gaffney is now in that hospital.

Besides ourselves on board there was a detachment of the 19th, the whole under the command of Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel Hamilton, of that corps, Major Raper, Lieutenants Harding and Scott, 19th, Holland, Ormand, and Roden, 86th. There were also three ladies, and a Scotch staff assistant-surgeon named Stewart.

Of all the old rotten transports that ever carried troops, this must have been the most abominable. The cabin could scarcely hold us all, and two of our sleeping berths were in it, and swarmed with cockroaches and rats. In addition to these comforts, the provisions and liquor were bad as bad could be. The captain was a low vulgar Scot, who was conveying troops for the first time, and most certainly it was also the first time he had ever associated with gentlemen.

Our great luxury was now and then a

sucking pig for dinner, and while we were eagerly devouring it the skipper would say, "Ah, this is braw feeding; gin ye eat this way in the Injies, ye'll be food for land-crabs in a month." The voyage was a most unpleasant and monotonous one, day after day the same. No whist, no books for our entertainment; sometimes the doctor would get drunk on rum, and imagine himself Bruce and Wallace alternately. So everyone was heartily rejoiced when, on the 20th of December, we entered Carlisle Bay. Our religious friend Roden read prayers and sang hymns constantly, and it was not until long after we landed that we knew how grossly he had insulted one of the officers' wives on board, who had the good sense to keep it to herself for the time.

It was a beautiful moonlight night when I obtained permission to go on shore and meet my father, who commanded the regiment in Barbadoes. The croaking of the frogs and other insects was something astounding, but next morning at breakfast how I did enjoy the fried flying-fish and the delicious Avacado pear (commonly called Subaltern's Butter),

after our detestable messing on board the "Robert." One of the greatest enjoyments in Barbadoes is the maubois, or spruce beer, left at your door as daylight dawns by the black women. I have never tasted anything more delightful than this harmless and invigorating beverage after a hot night in the tropics.

I liked the island very much. There was plenty of gaiety, and the dances at Betsy Austin's and Nancy Clarke's were most amusing. Marryat describes the scenes of life in Barbadoes most accurately in "Peter Simple." The disease called "moon-blindness" is very common, but I never knew of a case occurring in any other island. Soldiers on their posts became suddenly blind, and I once at night met one wandering half a mile from his sentry-box. Many, many years after, when going out to Bombay in command of troops, the two medical men on board reported to me that three or four soldiers on watch said they could not see in the "moonlight," but they considered it only an excuse to get off duty. Remembering my old West Indian experience, I did not coincide with

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the doctors as to its being all sham. The men were minutely examined, and the doctors were at last compelled to confess that such a disease might exist. They wanted me at first to shave the men's heads; but I am not one of those who give implicit credence to all that medical men say, as they are often deceived in thinking there is nothing the matter with soldiers who complain of being unwell. There are no doubt plenty of malingerers, but the character of the man should be taken into consideration. I will relate two instances of my own knowledge to bear me out in what I say.

Shortly after my arrival in Barbadoes a man named Byrne was tried by court-martial for "malingering," and, on the medical evidence, convicted and sentenced to a corporal punishment of "two hundred lashes," a punishment which was inflicted. Byrnes remained in hospital some time, but eventually came out and returned to his duty, still, however, complaining of the inward pain he had so frequently gone into the sick list for. Having again reported himself unfit to do the duty of a soldier, he was a second time

tried by court-martial, and again, on the evidence of the medical men, convicted. He was not flogged, but sentenced to "solitary confinement." On the second day of his imprisonment he was found dead in his cell, and, on his body being opened, it was discovered to be one mass of disease, and this poor creature, with his numerous complaints, had, through the stupidity and ignorance of the medical men, suffered the torture of corporal punishment, and, had he not luckily died, would, at the termination of his imprisonment, probably have suffered it again. I never forgot this incident in my military career, and it was certainly fortunate for myself and others that I did not.

Shortly after my regiment arrived from India they were stationed at Gosport, and the usual Winter marching out took place. One morning at the orderly-room a prisoner was brought up—a man named Troy—confined for falling out of the ranks the day before, and reporting himself sick to the doctor without cause. I was rather surprised at his being brought up on such a charge, as I knew him to be one of the finest and most

manly soldiers in the regiment, and one who had gone through the whole Indian Mutiny without a murmur. The doctor, a young assistant-surgeon, said he was convinced there was nothing the matter with him. In my own mind I was of a very different opinion, from what I knew of the man's character.

"Sir," said Troy, "I have not been very well for some time, and yesterday, when marching out, a sudden weakness came over me, and I was obliged to fall out; but sure, Sir, you know me too well to think I would do so for nothing in a march of a few miles."

"Indeed, Troy," I replied, "I do perfectly believe you, and I think in this instance, Mr. ——," turning to the doctor, "you are mistaken."

The doctor, not being well pleased at my decision, touched his hat and left the orderly-room. The next morning, about the same time, a sergeant came over to me and reported that poor Troy had dropped dead in the barrack-room, and, on his body being dissected, the heart and lungs were found to be extensively diseased. My Barbadoes expe-

rience here came to the rescue, for it would not have been a pleasant circumstance for either the doctor or myself had I sentenced this man to knapsack drill, and he had died during its infliction. But to return to Barbadoes.

The great amusement in the island at that time was the cruel and now almost exploded sport of "cock-fighting." There was scarcely a gentleman in the island that had not, to use a racing term, "his stud of cocks." Enormous sums were lost and won on a main. There were meetings the same as race-meetings in England, where main after main was fought all day, and sometimes all night, and duels and death were often the result. Every morning the barracks were crowded with black fellows selling cocks, and the sale was abundant. I plead guilty to having bought one, and only once, induced by the praises showered upon it by the owner. "He berry good cock, massa. He true St. Martin, massa." I was seduced by the man's account of the animal, and gave five dollars for him. He fought three battles, in which he was so easily victorious that I

thought I had got the "cock of the walk," when, alas! I pitted him against a well-known pugilist of Johnnie Best's, son of the man who shot Lord Camelford, backed him for all I was worth, and, lo! he turned tail in the first flight. I lost my money, wrung my champion's neck, and eschewed cock-fighting for ever.

One of the best-known characters at that period in Barbadoes was the late Sir C. —, a tall military and at the same time ferocious-looking personage. He acquired great renown for his defence of Tariffa during the Spanish war, and by his feat of flinging out of a window a Spanish captain who, by mistake, had entered his quarters, the said captain's neck being broken. At a cock-fight he quarrelled with a Mr. Hall, whom he shot, and, curious to say, the name of his house was Shot Hall. He was not the pleasantest man in the world, but a votary of every kind of sport. My father was one of his few allies, and Lady ——, taking a fancy to me, I was very often a visitor at Shot Hall, when her amusement and mine

was drinking porter and shooting with a pistol at targets.

Sir James Lyon was commander-in-chief of the Windward and Leeward Islands at this time. Dining with him one day, he offered me a lieutenancy in his own regiment—the 24th, but my father would not allow me to accept it, as I expected one shortly in my own corps. It was very kind of Sir James, one of the most gentlemanly men I ever met, and universally beloved by all under his command.

One of the greatest luxuries, and which would go far to drive a London alderman mad with delight, is the "land-crab." Of all the delicious dishes I ever tasted it certainly bears the palm, when cooked by a negro cook. How my mouth waters even now, when I think of it! Many people fancy, from what they have heard, that it is the same crab that frequents the burial-places, and feeds upon the bodies of the dead, but such is far from being the case. At certain seasons of the year the crabs descend from the mountains, generally at night, and are caught by the negroes. You will sometimes see the hills perfectly illuminated by the

torches borne by the blacks searching for these animals, which, when caught, are at once conveyed to a pond or inclosure, where they are carefully fed and purged of all impurities. After some time they are considered fit for eating, and certainly when sent up to table they are a dish fit for an emperor.

While in Barbadoes the 27th Regiment arrived from St. Vincent and Grenada, to remain until they embarked for England. An officer of our regiment had some cousins in the 27th, among whom were two young ladies, daughters of a field-officer, to whom he gave up his rooms. The officers of the newly arrived corps happened to dine with us, and our religious friend, Roden, in some way discovered that the ladies were in G——'s quarters, and probably thought they were not what they ought to be. He commenced his operations by sending certain fruits with his compliments, the fruits being dressed in a most indecent way; he then left the mess, and endeavoured to force his way into their presence, but his most ruffianly conduct was made known, and the consequence was that

next morning he received three hostile messages: one from G——, another from the father of the ladies, and one from the husband, for one of them was married to the doctor of the 27th. A most humble written apology, dictated to and written by the scoundrel, was accepted, but the garment of sanctity in which he had previously clothed himself had fallen from his shoulders, and the fangs of the snake began to make their appearance, and he was guilty of many villanies that made his name for many a day a slur and reproach to the regiment, for allowing him to remain so long in it.

I am now about to relate so romantic a story, that, had I the power of pen possessed by Miss Braddon, Wilkie Collins, &c., I could weave it into a three-volume sensation novel, with this difference, that mine would not be a flight of the imagination, but veritable truth. There are always in Carlisle Bay some ship or ships belonging to the fleet on the West India station; at this time there had been in it for some weeks the B——, Captain ——. Among the junior lieutenants was a very handsome, gentlemanly young

fellow, whom I shall call Crawfurd. I became very intimate with him, and he dined with me frequently at the mess, as I had several times done with him on board the B——; in fact we became great friends. Crawfurd kept a gig and horse, and seemed to have plenty of money, but when night came he invariably left the barracks, always refusing the shakedown prepared for our naval friends. One morning he came on shore early, breakfasted with me, said he was going a short distance into the country, and asked me to accompany him. We accordingly started, and after driving two or three miles he turned up an avenue, at the end of which was one of the prettiest cottages I had ever seen. As the gig drove up to the door, I saw a most beautiful face looking through the verandah, but which was immediately withdrawn when a second person was seen in the gig. "By Jove!" I exclaimed, "what a lovely face!" My companion smiled. A black boy, grinning like a monkey, came out and took the horse and gig while we entered the cottage. It was very nicely, I may say beautifully, furnished. My friend left the room, and in

about ten minutes returned, accompanied by the owner of the charming countenance I had previously seen. A more lovely form and face I had never looked at before. Tall in figure, her eyes and hair were jet black, her nose a perfect Grecian, and her mouth, adorned with teeth like pearls, was one of the very smallest I had ever seen. Josephine was the name of this transcendent creature; a native of Cuba, but of European parents, she spoke English very well, and was as ladylike in her manner as she was lovely in appearance. We remained to dinner, and at night returned to Bridgetown. Crawfurd, of course, bound me to secrecy as to the existence even of such a person, and then gave me the history of his amour.

While the ship to which he belonged was stationed at Jamaica, he obtained leave for a month, and proceeded to Cuba on a visit to a relation long settled there. Among the Spanish families on visiting terms with his relative, was that of Don Joseph Cardillo, whose daughter was considered the beauty of the island. Meeting frequently, Crawfurd and Josephine fell deeply in love with each other,

but Josephine's father intended her to marry a young Spaniard of noble family. Previous to seeing Craufurd she had shewn no disinclination to the proposed marriage, but no sooner had she met my friend two or three times than, with the fire that flames the southern blood, she determined that he and he alone should be her husband. To make a long story short, they fled together from Cuba, and managed to reach Jamaica, where they were married by a Roman Catholic priest, but not by the Protestant clergyman, Josephine's scruples being quite satisfied by the rites performed by a minister of her own religion.

In the meantime her father and discarded lover had sworn the deepest vengeance both against her and the heretic lover. They discovered that Jamaica was the place of their refuge, and on one occasion Crawfurd nearly fell a victim to the dagger of an assassin, evidently employed by one or other of the injured parties. His marriage was kept a perfect secret from every person, even on board his own ship, except the surgeon—a particular friend. Finding that to remain

in Jamaica would only entail destruction on himself and his beloved one, he determined to send her to Barbadoes, particularly as it was reported that his ship would soon proceed to the Leeward Islands. She was accordingly sent in a merchant vessel in charge of the captain, arrived safely, and had taken up her abode where I had been introduced to her. I went there several times with Crawfurd, and was delighted with her pleasant society and enchanting manners. She evidently adored her husband, and he certainly appeared devoted to her, yet, with all her beauty and fascination, there was sometimes a light that gleamed from her dark lustrous eye, which plainly showed that if insulted or forsaken, her Spanish blood could avenge itself.

A short time after this I thought I perceived a great change in Crawfurd. At periods he was morose and silent, and drank more than I had ever seen him take; in fact, I began to suspect that he was troubled about money matters, and that the small private means he possessed was not sufficient by a great way to pay the large ex-

penses entailed upon him by what I may call his unfortunate connection with Josephine. He had often spoken to me of an uncle, a celebrated shipbuilder, who had received the honour of knighthood in testimony of his great capabilities in that line. Truth to tell, I saw such a great change in Crawfurd that I began to fear I knew not what; but within a few days the explosion took place, and it was certainly much worse than I ever anticipated.

It seems my misguided and unfortunate friend, finding his difficulties too great to be overcome, had forged his uncle, the shipbuilder's, name to bills for a large amount, and obtained the money through or from the house of C—— and Co., a celebrated firm in Barbadoes. The last mails from England had brought out information of the discovery of the forgery, and steps were at once taken for the arrest of Crawfurd; but when the officers of justice went on board to apprehend him he was not to be found. How he contrived I know not, but he certainly escaped from the island. I went to see Josephine, and found her in a state of distraction. He had

seen her, and left nearly thirty pounds in doubloons, telling her everything, and that, to save his life, he was obliged to fly. Where he was gone to she did not know, but he had informed her that his means of escape had been duly taken, and there was little chance of the law officers getting hold of him. More she knew not, but he had said that he would write when in safety.

A very few days after this we were ordered to Antigua and St. Kitts, and the remainder of poor Crawfurd's story was told me by one who knew all the circumstances, and had been his shipmate for years. Some months after Crawfurd's desertion, a pirate vessel had committed some fearful ravages upon our merchantmen off the coast of Cuba; in fact, had become a perfect terror to all the vessels sailing from Jamaica. Ships of war were despatched in pursuit, but were of no avail. The pirate was sighted several times, but on each occasion, from his superior sailing powers, escaped. It began to be rumoured that the pirate ship was commanded by an Englishman, an officer of the British navy. These rumours became a

certainty at last, from communications made to the authorities in Jamaica by persons in Cuba, who asserted that Crawfurd was the captain of the pirate. More than two years had passed away, and the pirate had also disappeared, when one day a coroner's inquest sat in Barbadoes on the body of a man discovered dead in a small house in Bridgetown, in which a woman of great beauty was also discovered in a dying state, but who, notwithstanding all the efforts of the medical men, died without revealing anything. To the astonishment of everyone, in the dead man was recognised the forger and pirate Crawfurd, and I have no doubt the poisoned woman was the unfortunate and beautiful Josephine. It was reported that she had poisoned him through jealousy, and then killed herself, as they had been heard quarrelling the day before.

There are a great number of Jews in Bridgetown who keep very respectable shops, and a good story is told of a fright one of them got some time before my arrival in Barbadoes. Black Hugh Fraser, of the 93rd

Highlanders, a perfect giant in size and strength, walking one day into the store of a certain Jew in the town, observed some sacks. "What is in the sacks?" he observed to the owner.

"Doubloons," replied the Jew. "Now, you are a very strong man, Captain Fraser, and if you can carry these two sacks to St. Anne's barracks without letting them down, you shall have the contents."

"Done," said Fraser.

The sacks were hoisted on his back, and he absolutely performed the herculean task of carrying them from the store to St. Anne's barracks without stopping. Meantime the Jew was calling upon Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and when Fraser arrived at the barracks he fairly began to howl and cry like a child. Fraser kept the doubloons two days in his quarters, and then restored them to the unhappy Jew, who, I suppose, never undervalued the strength of a Highlander again. Every person thought Fraser very foolish to perform such a task for nothing.

The messing in Barbadoes is certainly not

the best in the world, beef and mutton being very bad, poultry, with the exception of pea fowl, also inferior. There is not a good fish market either, flying fish being the best to be had. A fish called "cavelli" is sometimes caught, but very seldom off the islands; it is principally taken near St. Vincent, and brought alive in salt water to Barbadoes, where they are kept in tanks, and used when required on great occasions. Sir C. S—— had always some on hand, and I have eaten them at his table, and they were certainly delicious. I never saw a snake in the island, although I believe there are some of a harmless nature. There is a small species of lizard called the "wood slave," very common in houses, which sometimes manage to fall upon your hands or face, and if they do, it is with difficulty they are taken off, it being sometimes necessary even to cut them in pieces. There are plenty of centipedes and scorpions.

Standing one day on the balcony of St. Anne's barracks, with a bow and arrow in my hand, which I had just purchased from a Demerara man, the bow and arrow being

used by the "Buck Indians" of South America, an officer with me said in jest, "Take a shot at that soldier of the West Indian Regiment," pointing to a man at least two or three hundred yards off. Never dreaming that I could send the arrow that distance, or in any way taking aim at the person, I pulled the bow with my whole strength, elevating it as high in the air as I could, and what was my horror when I heard a fearful howl from the unfortunate black! We all ran down to the spot, and found that the arrow in its descent had regularly passed through his foot. The pain must have been very great, and he evidently felt it to be so, as I never heard a man make such a row. The hospital being near at hand, he was taken there, and the arrow extracted by the doctor; but he remained some time in it, and I had to pay the piper. It's a saying, "A chance shot may kill the devil," and it certainly was exemplified in this case, for I never thought of hitting the poor black man. What with shooting old Biddy Tiernan at Roscrea, and the black warrior at Barbadoes, I was

certainly not very fortunate in my freaks with deadly weapons.

As we are about to leave Barbadoes, I shall finish my account of it by relating a ludicrous scene that took place previous to our departure. There had been a regular clearing and cleaning of the cesspools of the garrison, and the dirt and filth had all been collected into a kind of pond about fifty feet in length and thirty in breadth, and not very far from the barracks occupied by the 19th Regiment. On the morning in question, poor Barney O'Ruark of that gallant corps, was to receive a breakfast of three hundred lashes. The square was formed, triangles up, drummers dressed on each side of them, everything prepared, and Colonel H——, another old Indian, was anxiously awaiting the arrival of Barney to commence operations. They waited and waited, but no Barney appeared to gladden the old warrior's vision. The sergeant-major was ordered to find out the cause of his delay, when a soldier was observed coming towards the square at the double. This was the corporal

of the escort that should have brought up the prisoner.

"Where the devil is he?" shouted the Colonel.

"Oh, be J—s, Sur," replied the corporal, a native of the Green Isle, "he's jumped into the *slush*, and swears the devil a toe he'll come for you or anyone else."

It seems that, as the escort with Barney were coming from the guard-house, they passed within thirty or forty paces of the aforesaid cesspool, when Barney, perfectly aware of what was waiting for him, and thinking he could not be much worse off, suddenly made a bolt from his guard, ran like a deer to the pool, and sprang right into the middle of it, nearly two feet deep in dirt of every description. The poor corporal begged and prayed Barney to come out to be flogged and not anger the Colonel, but Barney did not see it, and finding he had taken up a most advantageous position, he refused to stir a peg; and not only that, but commenced to pelt the unhappy escort with every species of dirt that he had at his command. In the meantime, the Adjutant

had arrived at the scene of action, but Barney was equally deaf to his allurements. The regiment was in roars of laughter, when old H—— put spurs to his horse and galloped to the aid of the Adjutant and sergeant-major, but so ludicrous was the whole affair that the old man burst out laughing himself. There was Barney in an attitude of defiance, both hands full of dirt, the Adjutant and sergeant-major on two different sides of the pool, now swearing, now entreating the obdurate fellow to come out, the corporal also putting in his word, for he was in a pretty fright himself about allowing his prisoner to escape.

"Arrah, Barney, come out, shure I'll be flogged in yer place, out wid ye, Barney, jewel."

"The devil a come out," says Barney, "if ye want me, fetch me, I'm mighty comfortable, barring the smell."

Colonel H—— was so tickled at the comical affair that he said, "Come out, you scoundrel, and I'll pardon you this time."

"Honour, Colonel," replies Barney.

"Honour," said the Colonel.

"Then, bedad, I'll come out," says Barney, "for I couldn't hould out much longer if I got five hundred."

Two days before we sailed a great main of cocks was fought in the country, and so successful were two of our officers, that, the money they won being paid in dollars, they had to engage two negroes to bring it home in sacks, each officer with a big stick guarding the niggers. Getting up to drink my maubois, I witnessed their arrival in barracks, the niggers bending under their load.

CHAPTER V.

ST. KITTS—BRIMSTONE HILL—PLANTERS BEFORE EMANCIPATION—CURIOUS SCENE—THE PIRATE—NOTORIOUS BISHOP OF C——— —MURDER OF KEEFE BY FENELON—PREJUDICE OF IRISH SOLDIERS—ANECDOTES OF MY FATHER—POOR DENIS FOX—THE FALSE PRIEST—TRICK PLAYED UPON AN OFFICER—AMUSING SCENE AT MESS—GALLOWS MICK AND THE COBRA CAPELLA—CATCHING A TARTAR—A TRUSTY SERVANT—FAMILY OF GIANTS.

IN 1830 the regiment was ordered to Antigua and St. Kitts, one company to the small island of Montserrat. The left wing, under my father's command, proceeded to St. Kitts, with Captains Mc——— and G———, and Lieutenant Roden, an assistant-surgeon and myself, a very small number of officers to the wing of a regiment. After a passage of three days, we cast anchor opposite the village of Sandy Point. Above, in awful grandeur, frowned the fortress of Brimstone Hill, where the military were

stationed. Certainly the name given to our residence did not convey much consolation to those doomed to remain there for a certain time. Bedlam Barracks, Brimstone Hill, Mount Misery, is not the most taking of cognomens, but what's in a name? Some of the pleasantest days of my life I spent in that same Brimstone Hill, and there "love's young dream" first began, which, after a lapse of nearly forty years, is still to "memory dear." My heart, even now, leaps with emotion when I meet or hear of those in St. Kitts, from whom I have been parted for many, many a year.

It is a lovely island, and the drive to Basseterre, the capital, a distance of about eleven miles from our quarters, a most beautiful one. From Brimstone Hill are seen the two Dutch Islands, St. Eustatia and Saba, in former years the stronghold of pirates and buccaneers; while from Basseterre, on the north side, the islands of St. Martin and St. Bartholomew are visible, on the east Antigua, and, about twenty miles off, the lovely little Island of Nevis. I cannot say much for the town itself, but the

hospitable mansion of Government House, and its gay old governor Maxwell, and his charming wife, was always open to the military, and many pleasant days I have spent in it with them. Mount Misery is between four and five thousand feet above the sea. The planters were most hospitable, and I have often, when riding between Basseterre and Brimstone Hill, called upon those perfectly unknown to me, and obtained a good glass of Sangaree or whatever I required, together with a hearty welcome. I have lived for days and weeks at their houses and never did I see so happy a race as the slaves. Their life appeared one continued laugh, and I can safely assert that, in the six years I served in the West India Islands, I never saw or knew one instance of cruelty towards them; and I suppose no military man ever mixed more in the society of the kind, generous gentlemen of the Islands than I did. Everything I hear now is changed: the Emancipation Act ruined them all, many emigrated to America, and although paying the twenty millions was a glorious act for England, yet I much doubt whether it

tended to the amelioration of the slave, or improved their morality in any way. In fact, from all I have read, the once prosperous West India Islands have become a splendid ruin, and as to society, &c., they are now a perfect desert.

We relieved a wing of the 93rd Highlanders, and being present at their embarkation, I witnessed a curious scene. Great numbers of black women, selling spruce beer, fruit, &c., were in attendance on the troops going on board ship. Among the spectators, I observed a tall powerful mulatto, with rings in his ears. If ever I could imagine a bloodthirsty pirate, this fellow was the picture of one. He had encroached upon the walk of one of the sentries, and although ordered several times to stand back, refused to do so, and commenced abusing the soldier in the foulest language. Captain Gordon, one of the officers passing by, the sentry reported the scoundrel's conduct to him. Gordon, upon this, told the man to go away, at the same time gently pushing him; instead of doing so, he struck Gordon a most violent blow in the face, knocking him down, and then

took to his heels. Gordon, an active Highlander, was on his legs in a moment, and with two of the men followed the fellow. After a race of about two hundred yards he was overtaken, and before Gordon could interfere, two bayonets were in his body. He was taken away, the blood flowing in torrents from his wounds, which, however, were not mortal; for some months afterwards, he with another, the very ditto of himself, attacked an officer and myself when returning to Brimstone Hill. The scoundrels did not, however, gain much by their attack, for after a desperate fight they were well thrashed, and received six months imprisonment, in addition, from the Civil Court at Basseterre; but neither myself nor friend came off scathless in the encounter.

The Highlanders, naturally incensed at the attack upon their officer, retaliated upon the negroes present, who bolted in every direction. All the bottles of spruce beer and maubois were broken, the fruit thrown into the sea, while the screams and protestations of the black women made the scene a most laughable one. I recollect an old grey-headed

Highlander, not much higher than a quart pot, and as broad as he was long, laying about him with a thick stick, and as he smashed every thing within his reach, the lower parts of the niggers included, exclaiming: "Strike a Highlanter — strike a Highlanter!" The ruffian who caused this *émeute* had been suspected of belonging to a famous pirate vessel, "Las Damas Argentinas," that had been brought into St. Kitts some time before by His Majesty's ship of war "Ranger;" but nothing could be brought home to him, as he was not on board when she was captured.

In the days I am writing of—pirates, in plenty, cruised about the West Indian seas, and "Las Damas Argentinas" had committed many outrages, until, unluckily for her, she fell into the hands of the "Ranger." She must have been short-handed at the time, as only thirty-one prisoners were taken, all of whom were tried at Basseterre, and, with the exception of two, condemned and executed. The captain was a very handsome, gentlemanly-looking man, said to have been a Spanish nobleman. He spoke several

languages fluently, and English perfectly. The crew were, with few exceptions, Spaniards and Portuguese, the exceptions being two or three Americans, a deserter from the "Ranger," a Welshman named Griffiths, the man acting as surgeon on board, an Englishman, and a boy, assistant to the doctor, from Berwick-on-Tweed. The medico turned King's evidence, and saved his life, and the boy was pardoned on account of his youth. But now comes the extraordinary part of the affair, which, if true, was certainly most curious. From documents found on board the vessel, it was proved, almost to a certainty, that the person acting as surgeon was no other than the notorious Bishop of C——, who had fled from England many years before on a fearful charge.

I may now as well relate a circumstance that occurred to myself some years before in connection with the above clerical worthy. Arriving in Dublin with my father by coach, he told me to get a hackney car to drive us to an hotel in Dawson Street. I accordingly called the first I met, and directed the driver

to come for our luggage. The person, however, that I engaged, managed to get into a quarrel with some one, and I recollect his using the following language: "Yes, I am the man, I am not ashamed of my name. I am Burns that was flogged from Newgate and back (the other place I do not recollect) for accusing the Bishop of C——, and I am not ashamed of it." Burns, the victim of this atrocious villain, finally drove us to the hotel. He was a short stout man, and I recollect his face and figure as if I had seen him only yesterday.

I have read that the Bishop died some year ago in Edinburgh, under the name of Wilson. However, there was no doubt that the papers found on board the pirate were of a very strong circumstantial nature, and their revelations were the current conversation in St. Kitts. Whether the authorities in the island communicated on the subject with those at home, or not, I cannot say; but it was presumed they did, and received instructions to let the matter drop, as little good could result, and a great scandal would be brought to light again, when people had

almost forgotten its existence. The doctor and the Scotch boy, it appeared in evidence, had joined the pirate from the Havanna about a year before they were captured.

The pirates were hanged in three batches. The foreign part of the crew met their deaths with the greatest *sang-froid*, smoking their cigarettes to the last moment. The Americans and the Welshman did not exhibit the same coolness. I suppose the former, being Roman Catholics, had received absolution, a priest having been sent for from Martinique, as there were none of that persuasion in the island, and probably imagined they were bound for heaven. The others, not having the same consolation, were, consequently, not so much at their ease. This is the only way in which I can account for their demeanour, for I have frequently noticed this apathy in meeting death among foreigners and Roman Catholic Irishmen. The doctor and cabin-boy were sent to Barbadoes, but what became of them afterwards I never heard, unless the former was the Bishop, and died in Edinburgh, as the newspapers stated.

We had plenty of gaiety in the island, and the balls and parties exhibited a show of fair damsels that would not disgrace any town in England. In fact, I have seen in St. Kitts more beautiful girls at one time in a room. than I ever did in England. Nearly all the young ladies are at an early age sent home to be educated, and return with all their native graces enhanced by education and the pure healthy air of England. Naturally pale, the rosy hue they bring with them adds not a little to their loveliness.

Not long after our arrival, a brutal murder was committed by a man named Fenelon, on a quiet harmless comrade called Keefe. The latter, who was cook, had not to attend parade, while Keefe, who was his orderly, had. Fenelon having got drunk, Keefe, to save him from punishment, took his belts and went to parade in his place. The other, awakening from a drunken sleep, missed them, and swearing by the Virgin he would shoot the man that took them, he loaded his musket, and as poor Keefe returned from parade, and was in the act of hanging up the belts, the ruffian came behind him, put the

muzzle of the musket to his back, and blew the contents through his body. The unfortunate man fell dead at once, the gun being so close to his person that his shirt was in flames.

The crime being so frightful a one, Fenelon, after he had been tried and sentenced to death, was ordered to be hanged in presence of the men on Brimstone Hill, and a French priest was sent for from Guadaloupe. Although one would have thought so dreadful a crime perpetrated on a comrade, and that comrade universally liked by his brother soldiers, a quiet, harmless, inoffensive man, would have occasioned a very strong feeling against Fenelon, yet, although there might have been such, no man of the regiment would assist in making or erecting the gallows, though there were plenty of carpenters among the soldiers. It may appear strange what I am now stating, nevertheless, it is true that Fenelon's gallows was made by an officer, Lieutenant G——t, a mechanical Scotchman, and erected under his directions by negroes. G——t afterwards declared he had never done anything with

such pleasure as he did this job. Such, however, is the detestation of Irish soldiers to anything in the shape of an informer, or hangman, that, although it was only doing justice on a villainous murderer, not one man out of upwards of three hundred would lend his assistance; but Jock G——t would have made a gallows for a dozen with pleasure if it was required.

I shall never forget this man's conduct on the scaffold. Fenelon was a fine, powerful, handsome-looking fellow, about 22 years of age, and when brought on the scaffold, he asked for an orange, which was given him, and one of his hands was loosened to enable him to eat it. After sucking it, he looked at his comrades, who were in a circle round the gallows, laughed, and shied the orange at one of them. He then felt the board beneath his feet, gave a stamp, and said, "Boys, this is a nice place for a jig; play up St. Patrick's day!" In two minutes more the murderer was in eternity. I afterwards asked some of the men if they did not think he deserved his death? They replied, cer-

tainly. Then how could they let Lieut. G——t make the gallows? The reply was:

"Shure, Sur, we would always be pointed at as the hangman or gallows-maker if we did."

I had often at this time an opportunity of fulfilling my vow relative to saving many poor fellows' backs from the lash. My father, one of the kindest-hearted men breathing, was still, according to the custom of the time, and of old Indian officers in particular, an advocate for flogging, and of course many courts-martial took place, but not one quarter of the number that occurred subsequently, when old Mac assumed the reins. Often have I locked the governor in his rooms, refusing to let him out unless he pardoned some poor fellow who was to be flogged that evening or next morning. I can see him now, his great curly head thrust out of the window, swearing, commanding, putting me under arrest, and vowing vengeance of every kind; and often, very often, I succeeded, particularly if the crimes were not of a very serious nature, and I had the good sense not to interfere if they were. It

is strange how custom habituates men to things. I have seen this strong, powerful man cry like a child over a story of distress in a book; his hand was ever open to the call of poverty and misery, and yet he could see day after day, and perhaps with little or no emotion, his brother men scourged like dogs. He considered it his duty, but often, stern soldier as he was, the softened heart overcame the sense of duty, and he forgave the offender. He was beloved by his men, who used often to say, "The Major's bark is much worse than his bite." Good, kind old father, many years you have been laid in the mould of the little churchyard of St. Saviour's, in Jersey, and none left the world more beloved and lamented by all who knew him.

One particular instance of his kind-heartedness I will relate. We had been spending the evening down the hill with a worthy Scotch couple, Dr. and Mrs. W——, the latter one of the very nicest specimens of her country I ever met, very handsome, and full of anecdote. My father had sung some of his sweet old Jacobite airs, in which we had all joined. The lady and he had talked

"Of Scotia's hills and dales,
And 'Auld Lang Syne,'"

and in great good-humour with all the world, my father and myself left to return to barracks. When we came to the gate where the main guard was stationed entering the fort, we knocked for the sentry to open it. No answer was received, and we knocked again, but still to no purpose. We then began to kick the gate, calling out for the sergeant of the guard, by whom it was at length opened. The sentry, a fine-looking young fellow, named Fox, was found fast asleep on his post, not even awakened by the din we had made, and was only aroused when well shaken by the sergeant. This was a dereliction of duty with a vengeance. A general court-martial would be held, and in all probability five hundred lashes would be the penalty. Fox was of course immediately made a prisoner of, and we proceeded to my father's rooms, his previous good temper having in a great measure left him.

I said nothing until we were comfortably seated, and had begun to talk of the pleasant evening we had spent, and gradually getting

round to his soft side, I opened the subject of the unfortunate sentry, and to my great surprise had very little difficulty in persuading him to let me go and release him. This I did, and you may imagine the joy of poor Fox. He threw himself at my feet, and his Irish expressions of endearment and devotion were poured forth with all the fervour of his race. Poor fellow, he went into hospital next morning, and in three days I followed the remains of Denis Fox to his last resting-place. The seeds of disease, or fever, must in all probability have been deeply seated within him when he fell asleep upon his post.

How greatly the army is improved now! At the time of which I am writing there were not thirty Protestants in the wing of the regiment, the remainder being Roman Catholics, and yet these men had to attend every Sunday the Protestant church, and listen to the sermon of a Protestant chaplain. If on their death-bed the rites most dear to Roman Catholics could not be obtained for them, they were buried by the Protestant clergyman. This great neglect of the

Catholic soldier, I am happy to say, has been long done away with. It is true that at Barbadoes, or any large towns where there were ministers of their religion this did not happen, as they went to the chapel; but in isolated islands like Antigua, St. Kitts, and Tortola, there was fearful neglect of their immortal interests, and well grounded were the complaints of the soldiers on the subject. At Antigua I remember a fellow, styling himself a Roman Catholic priest, called on the commanding officer at the Ridge Barracks, and asked permission to perform the duties of his religion to the soldiers. The request was granted with pleasure, and notwithstanding the opposition of two very bigoted Protestant officers he was asked to mess. He was a very vulgar ill-looking man, and I remember McManus, one of the mess-waiters, a rank Orangeman, saying to me as he was laying the cloth, when I happened to be in the mess-room, "Begor, Sir, I'll have to look after the spoons, if that Papist parson dines at mess." But dine he did, and the last I saw of him, about two in the morning, was his two Protestant opponents and him-

self embracing one another and swearing eternal friendship. He remained for two days, and obtained the large sum of four hundred dollars from the soldiers. He left the third day, and the day after, as I was riding down the Ridge towards English Harbour, I heard a kind of grunting in a ditch, and getting off my horse to find out the cause, I beheld my friend the priest lying stupidly drunk, in fact so drunk that I could not awaken him in any way, and this about twelve o'clock in the day. What became of him I know not, but some days after a letter reached the authorities warning them against this fellow, who appears to have been a most clever swindler and scoundrel. He had been once in orders, but for his malpractices had been stript of his gown, and turned out of the church. He had made a round of several islands, and obtained large sums from the Catholic soldiers stationed in them; and all this was the fault of a miserly government. What brave gallant fellows are the true Roman Catholic priests! Opposed to them as I am in principle, I cannot help testifying to their total

disregard of danger in every form. I have seen them when their conduct has shamed that of the Protestant minister. When the most dreadful cholera that ever attacked a station, (Kurrachee) was at its worst, I gazed upon them in admiration, and afterwards on the field of battle I ever found their conduct the same. They are now, and most properly, put on a par with the Protestant and Presbyterian chaplains, and one great ground of complaint on the part of the Catholic soldiers is removed.

But to return to St. Kitts. A draft now arrived, which gave us an addition of three officers, Captain W——, Brevet Major G—— and Lieutenant H——. W—— had been stationed many years before in the island in another corps. He was not a nice man by any means, and always reminded me in appearance of Captain Weazel—that is the name I think—in "Roderick Random." He had married a lady considerably older than himself, who kept him in beautiful order. She was frightfully jealous, and not without cause, for W—— was a great admirer of the fair sex, and there was a terri-

ble blow-up soon after his arrival; a good looking young girl, slightly coloured, having made her appearance on the hill with her nearly black mamma, and claimed poor W—— as her papa. Old mother W—— was in a fearful gale for some time; but at length calmed down so much as even to allow the girl now and then to call and see her male parent. W—— was constantly saying "I wish to Gad I was back in my old corps, I'd give five hundred pounds to be in it again." Saying this openly one night at mess, old Paddy Burns of the 19th Regiment, drily remarked to him, "Perhaps, Captain W——, the officers of your present regiment would gladly make the money up for ye." W—— was very quiet for a long time afterwards. I must plead guilty to having played a very wicked trick upon him once at the Hill. The artillery officers quarters were close to ours, but in a house by itself. The magnificence of the quarters built for the artillery and engineers in the West India Islands, compared with those given to the unfortunate line, is really astonishing, and ought to have caused severe

reprehension. While a field-officer of infantry had only two small rooms to occupy, a subaltern of the above corps would be inhabiting a large mansion containing rooms innumerable. The artillery quarter on the Hill was a very fine one, and one officer alone lived in it. A very pretty woman, the wife of an artillery soldier, took care of the house, and I often saw W—— throwing sheeps' eyes at her. One day going into the house, I observed her and him in close communication in the stable. I crept quietly up and shut the door. I had seen Mrs. W—— evidently looking for her husband, and I advanced to meet her, when, as I expected, she asked me if I knew where he was. I pointed to the stable, and then made off to my own room to watch the result. Mrs. W——, I saw, had gone straight up to the stable door, opened it, and caught her delinquent husband in the very act of kissing the artilleryman's better-half. My eyes! what a shindy took place as the three issued from the stable! Alternately abusing both, the unfortunate W—— was driven home, and not let out of his wife's sight for a very long

time. W—— never knew that I had informed upon him.

Brevet-major G——n was another extraordinary character. He had served for many years in the 60th, when stationed in Jamaica, and was a handsome strong-built man, close on fifty, a great admirer of duelling and wrestling. I believe he took a liking to me from my having given him a couple of fair back falls soon after his arrival, for, old as he was, he was ready to wrestle with anyone. According to his own account, he had fought innumerable duels. He was very deaf, a tremendous talker, and you were obliged to bawl as loud as you could to make him hear you. I recollect one very stormy morning meeting him out walking round the fort. "How is Mrs. G——n, Major?" I said. "Very windy indeed, sir, very windy," was the reply, thinking I was alluding to the day. He was not a bad fellow by any means, although from his deafness and yarns a great bore.

The last arrival, H——n, was, like myself, a very wild, reckless young fellow. When an infant he had been picked up on the field

of Sobral, in Portugal, by the late Sir John W——n, reared and educated at his expense, receiving a first-rate college education, and eventually obtaining a commission through the interest of his patron. Very dark he was in complexion, a perfect Portuguese, a first-rate classical scholar, and clever to a degree, abilities that properly applied might have made him a man of note in any profession. He has written in half-an-hour a sermon preached next morning by the clergyman. Intended originally for the bar, Sir John found it was useless, in consequence of his wildness and extravagance, to educate him for it; and seeing that nothing could check his reckless career, he obtained for him a commission, gave him a sum of money, and washed his hands of him for ever. He had given his protégé some wonderful Christian names, viz.: Brutus Amelius Sobral Dalmedia H——n. He did not remain long with us, but went through some wonderful vicissitudes in life after leaving, and was buried in London some twenty years ago as a pauper.

Our religious friend, Roden, now came out in a new light. I had always thought him a

temperate man, but latterly, and particularly on mess nights, he seldom or never left the mess sober. In the daytime the singing of psalms and hymns was continually going on in his quarters, where he had managed to collect a congregation of young coloured girls, who daily went to his room to hear the Scriptures expounded, and join in the prayers. At the same time a coloured girl was living with him as his mistress. H——n and myself have often taken him to his bed stupidly drunk, yet next day the same sacred orgies went on. I have often thought since how these things were allowed, and why a stop was not put to this man's hypocritical proceedings. It appears he had summoned several of his female congregation before the magistrate at Sandy Point, on divers notes of hand they had given him for money lent, and had by law recovered the sums he said he had so given. When the congregation was broken up, many of the girls declared they had been seduced by him, and that the money was given and the notes of hand taken by him, merely to enable him, as he said, to keep his accounts, and, I should say, prevent their exposing the

gross wickedness and immorality that, under the guise of religion, had been so long going on. Finding by letters from England that he was about to be appointed to an unattached company, and that his name would in all probability be in the next Gazette that arrived, he made his onslaught on the congregation, and absolutely recovered money to the amount of two hundred dollars from his victims. By the very next mail he obtained his promotion, when the officers were about to have the charges I have mentioned investigated. When he left the wing, not one brother-officer saw him off or shook his hand, but he departed with the execration of all belonging to it. I afterwards heard that he obtained the paymastership of a regiment, but was obliged to leave for pecuniary defalcations, sell his commission, and no doubt sink into the poverty and degradation he so richly deserved. I have met many queer characters in my time, but so stupendous a villain as Roden I never came across.

They say that if a man was to fall from the roof of a house in Aberdeen, he would be

sure to alight upon a "Gordon or a Forbes." The same thing might also be said in St. Kitts, relative to a R——ns and a C——n, for they were the great names in the Island. At the time I write of, Chief Justice P——d was at variance with the Governor, by whom he had been suspended. What the merits of the case were I do not know, but I shall never forget the kindness I received from him and my beloved friend, his son Edwin, at their estate called the Goodwin, about two miles from the hill. After we left the Island, the Chief Justice's name was absolutely placed on the gate of the fort, to prevent his entrance into it, and was the cause of a duel between my friend E—— and Sir James Hay of the 36th. As I said before, I was ignorant of the merits of the quarrel, but certainly to place a Chief Justice's name on a barrack gate was a very curious proceeding. Of all the fine, generous, noble-minded youths I ever met with, Edwin P——d bore the palm. I trust he is yet alive, as he was when I last heard of him years ago. There are some friends of your youth you can never forget,

and I have never forgotten him, and what he did for me in those days of our boyhood.

Some little time after we arrived at St. Kitts Mrs. Watson took me to call upon a family named B——, and there I met my fate, for I fell in love with the youngest daughter of the house. A more beautiful girl than Sarah B—— the world never saw, and my worthy governor, who considered himself a judge in these matters, after dancing a quadrille with her, which he had not done for years, declared her to be the handsomest girl he had ever seen. It was my first love, and most sincere it was. On the very first day after our return from calling, Mrs. Watson said to my father, "I much fear, Major, I've done some mischief in bringing yon bonnie lassie and your bonnie laddie together." For, although I say it myself, I was a very good-looking fellow. Instead of the delicate boy I looked when I joined at Newry, I was five feet eight, weighed eleven stone, and measured thirty-nine inches round my chest. In all feats of strength and activity I was a great proficient, and seldom met my match. At eighteen I was as strong as I was at

twenty-five, and very few soldiers in the wing could throw me in wrestling, and in an Irish regiment there are plenty of good hands at that manly exercise. In love, however, I was, and my amusement and delight, when on the hill, used to be to mount to the citadel and gaze upon two cocoa-nut trees that denoted the residence of my fair one, about three miles off. I also began to make verses, and considered myself no end of a poet when they were published in the Basseterre papers. The only rides I indulged in were on the roads that led to her abode. In the words of William Kennedy, a poet now long dead:

> "I felt as if existence went and came,
> E'en when the meanest hind who served
> Her father, breathed her name."

I was not yet nineteen, and certainly no youth of that age was ever more devotedly in love; so much so that the memory of it has remained a sweet spot in my mind even to this day. I dare not say any more at this time, as my present wife, to whom I have been married thirty years, is looking over my shoulder, and her looks are not pleasant.

Meantime, my love was returned, and I was happy as the day was long. Her father was of Irish descent, and a Roman Catholic, her mother a daughter of the late Admiral Sir William F——, a Protestant. Strange to say, the girls were brought up to their father's religion, and the boys to the mother's. Mr. B—— had proceeded to England for his health, and had left the old Admiral as guardian to his family. He was a native of St. Kitts, and lived in the island.

I shall never forget the day I went to call upon him, and ask his consent to my engagement and future marriage to his grand-daughter. He was a tall, saturnine, and I considered a savage-looking old man, and had lately married a beautiful young girl from Bermuda, a great ally of mine. I have been in many a battle-field since that time, have been in the midst of disease of the direst and most dreadful kind, yet I certainly never felt in such a fright as when I was ushered into his presence. "Well, young gentleman," and I thought his tones were awful, "I have received your letter, and you have come to ask permission to

marry my grand-daughter. However, Sir, you have acted honorably in so doing. How old are you?" "Eighteen," I stammered out. "And Sarah sixteen. Upon my word a very old couple you will be. What will your parents say to it? You know she is a Roman Catholic." This was the hitch I knew, which, in addition to my youth, would appear serious when the matter was referred to my mother. I, however, managed to say something or other; shook hands with the Admiral, and left the house, hardly knowing whether I was standing on my head or my heels. I wrote home, but more of this by and by.

We used to have some very jolly nights at mess, particularly our guest days. I remember a very amusing scene one night, and the conversation that then took place, although so many years have elapsed, remains still distinct in my memory. Hutchinson was abusing the messing in no measured terms, and swearing we never had any thing to eat except the old original guinea fowl, when old Major G——n said: "You young fellows talk of eating; by Gad! Sir, you should have been with me on the retreat

from Burgos. By Gad, Sir, I lived for a fortnight on acorns—acorns, Sir, by Gad!"

Everyone, of course, laughed, and old Mac, in his dry way, said: "I suppose you made soup of them."

"Yes," replied G——n, "and d—d good soup they made."

Old Mac made some reply, that G——n, from his imperfect hearing, construed into a disbelief of what he had said about the acorns, and suddenly starting up in a fury, roared out. "By Gad! Captain Mac, I believed your infernal Indian stories, and you have a right to believe mine. By Jove, Sir, I've shot a man for less than you have done just now."

Old Mac, who had really done, or said, nothing to call for this attack, and who was about as peppery a customer as the other, jumped up and retorted in an equal rage.

"I said nothing, but noo, Sir, damn your acorns, I don't believe one word of them, and ye can shoot me if ye like. I'm plain Mac* away from here."

"And by Gad, Sir, I will," replied G——n,

* G——n, although a Brevet-Major, was regimentally junior to Mac.

"and I now tell you, your story of Gallows Mike is all a make up, and never occurred."

The two old gentlemen were both about to leave the room, and a fight there would certainly have been, notwithstanding all our attempts at conciliation, when suddenly the front door of the mess-room was thrown open, and a soldier, in his shirt-sleeves, rushed up to the President, and seized the two black bottles of Madeira before him, and as quickly bolted out of the door again. Old Mac roared out to hold the rascal, and Hutchinson and myself gave chase, and after a race of upwards of one hundred yards, we captured Private Patrick Walsh with a bottle of Madeira under each arm, and brought him back in triumph to the mess-room. Paddy was a simple-hearted poor fellow, who, when a little in liquor, would do anything he was told, and having taken a drop that night, his comrades had dared him to go into the officers' mess-room and take the bottles of wine off the table, and Paddy had done so. The scene was altogether so ludicrous that we managed to make the two old gentlemen shake hands

while Paddy was sent to the guard-house, but released next day with a lecture.

The story with which G——n had taunted old Mac, was, I believe, a veritable fact. An officer of the regiment, when they were stationed in India, and who went by the name of Gallows Mick, going home very screwed from the mess one night, lay down and went to sleep under some trees, where he slept until morning. When he awoke, he felt something tight round his throat, and most luckily did not put his hand to his neck. Suddenly the tightness round his throat began to relax, and gradually a large cobra-copella, or hooded-snake, one of the deadliest in India, glided from his body into the jungle. Mick was, for a long time, very much impressed by this incident, and it was a considerable period before he got completely over it. A few days after this took place, Major G——n, Captain Mac, and one or two more, were standing at the mess-room window overlooking a large dry tank, when I observed a snake lying on the top of the wall. Taking a small stick, I rushed down, but by the time I arrived at

the spot, the snake had fallen into the tank. Without thinking, I jumped over the wall after it, a fall of nearly six feet, and ran at the snake. To my horror the reptile curled itself up on its tail, and made bound after bound towards me. Seized with a sudden panic, I regularly turned tail, and ran round the tank pursued by the snake. I was in a pretty fix. If I attempted to scale the wall, my enemy would certainly attack my rear, and I had, therefore, nothing to do but continue my flight round and round the reservoir, and shout for assistance, for I never had the least idea of confronting my assailant. At length, a soldier, named Farrell, jumped into the tank, with his ramrod in his hand, and having more courage than I possessed, killed the snake, which, however, manfully bore itself to the last. Meanwhile, my comrades, at the window, were in roars of laughter at my mishap. The most ridiculous part of the affair was that there is not a venomous snake of any description in St. Kitts; and this one, I knew, was perfectly harmless; but the rare circumstance of a snake bound-

ing after a man completely knocked me silly. It was a good laugh at me for a long time.

This puts me in mind of a very good story that occurred when we were at Demerara. One of our officers kept a small boa constrictor in a large barrel, and one day caught an immense water-rat. To every person he met he gave an invitation to come and see the "boa eat the rat." A number of us went, but 'twas "t'other way," for the rat ate the boa-constrictor. The snake had evidently been gorged, for when the rat was put into the cask, it hardly moved, but the rat at once flew at the boa's neck, and after a short time absolutely pulled the throat out of the snake and killed it. When the owner was met afterwards, it was always "How about the boa that ate the water-rat."

About this time a grand ball was given at Charlestown, the capital of Nevis, by the gentlemen of the island, and an invitation was sent to us. Hutchinson and myself, being the only dancing men, accepted the invitation. We joined two or three civilians at Basseterre. The sail to Charlestown is very

pretty, and the views from Nevis equal to anything in the West Indies. The estates at the time I am speaking of were generally in the hands of and managed by the owners, from many of whom I received the kindest invitations to remain on the island. The ball was a very good one, but I did not see so many pretty girls as I was accustomed to see in the St. Kitts parties; most probably I was thinking of one I had left there, the most beautiful of all. The hotel was so crowded that our party had to put up with one bedroom, in which we managed to shake down. I had brought over with me, as my servant, a little Irish boy named Teddy Coleman, the son of a soldier in the regiment. I had saved the boy's life once while bathing, at great risk to myself, and he was very much attached to me. I had given him strict warning not to lose any of my things. Hutchinson and myself had one large box between us. The morning after the ball we did not turn out until late, and, when we did so, our civilian friends began to miss almost everything they had—one his coat, another his boot, handkerchiefs, neck-cloths, &c.; odd socks, odd shoes there were in abundance,

but no fellows. No one could imagine what had become of them, when by chance, going to our large box and opening it, all the lost articles were found. Sending for Teddy, I asked him what the devil he meant by putting the other gentlemen's property into my box.

"Shure, Sir, didn't ye tell me to take care of your things, and I put everything I could get into the box, sartain if I did ye'd be shure of your own."

I spent four or five days at Eden the beautiful residence of John Huggins, Esq. There were two lovely girls, his daughters, lately come out from England, and a very pleasant time I passed. Fanny, the most taking of the two, became the wife of a gallant Colonel in the Service, celebrated for his excellent letters from and concerning the West Indies, and I was sorry indeed to read of her death some years since. About a year or two ago, I saw the marriage of one of her sons, previous to going out to India.* *Tempus fugit*—it does indeed make an old man of me.

* Her other son, Assistant Commissary-General O'C——r, has, I am happy to say, been promoted for his service in the late Ashantee War. General O'C——r died some months ago.

Mr. H—— had a very fine property in those days, and belonged to one of the oldest Creole families in Nevis. Walking with him to visit his sugar-houses one morning, we met his overseer, a gigantic Scotchman named Galbraith, from Dumbartonshire, who must have been six feet six in height, and made in proportion. Mr. H—— said he was the shortest of six brothers. I never knew a very tall man that was not in general the smallest of the family, or had not some gigantic brothers and sisters. I recollect old Matheson, the barrack-master at Berbice, certainly one of the most magnificent men I ever saw, six feet four and perfect in figure. When a little tight, indeed sometimes when sober, he would swear that in his day he was the smallest man in the Isle of Mull, and say his son was a degenerate Matheson because he was only six feet, but accounted for the degeneracy inasmuch as his mother was an Englishwoman. When belonging to the Staff Corps in the Pensinsula, he was supposed to be the strongest man in the Army. The late Sir Charles F. S—— was also a giant in height and strength. These two men

were pitted against each other to find out which was the best man, they were to roll the wheel of an enormous waggon up a steep hill; but the Mull man won in a canter. I have seen five brothers in Scotland of the name of Cumming, who averaged six feet four, but this was nothing to Galbraith and his kin, if true.

There used to be some excellent baths when I was at Nevis, but at this distance of time I hardly remember what they were most beneficial for, but I think rheumatism. Some kind of medicinal water was also drunk, combining sulphur and iron, with a most detestable taste.

Nevis I should imagine to be the healthiest island in the West Indies, from the pureness of its air; when rising in the morning I have almost fancied myself in England from the bracing feel of the atmosphere.

CHAPTER VI.

BOYISH PRANKS—FIGHT WITH THE NATIVES—THE MANX-MAN AND THE IRISHMAN—FEARFUL WIGGING—PADDY KEATING'S READING OF OTHELLO—TIGER MAC—THE ATHEIST—VIOLENT GALE—ANTIGUA—HEALTH IN THE WEST INDIES—GROUPER FISHING—NARROW ESCAPE OF AN ADJUTANT—HIGHLAND SOLDIER SHOT—SAVAGE ATTACK AT THE THEATRE—MURDER OF CORPORAL NORRIS—PADDY KEOGH'S DUEL—LUDICROUS SCENE—ST. LUCIA—DEADLY SNAKES.

I MUST plead guilty at this time to have been one of the wildest of the wild, and was continually getting into scrapes, although an engaged man, or rather boy, and in my escapades I was well supported by Master Brutus Amelius H——. I had been brought up before the Governor, Colonel M——, for dressing myself up as a young coloured girl, and going to church in Basseterre at night. On coming out of the church, I was met, and my female delicacy insulted by two young

European storekeepers, who were perfectly astonished and disgusted when the young female on whom they attempted to be so sweet floored them both, and kicked one of them until she was tired, before they found out their mistake. In revenge, they reported me direct to Government House, and of course I got well wigged by the kind old man, who concluded by asking me to dinner, and laughing afterwards at my account of the affair, and the appearance of my two opponents, who were both pretty well marked.

The next time I was brought before him was a more serious affair, and might have cost me my commission. A kind of feud had sprung up between Brutus and myself on the one side, and some coloured people residing in Sandy Point, arising out of the imprisonment the two coloured men received for their attack upon us. They had threatened us several times, and once or twice we had narrowly escaped an ambuscade laid for us on our return to the Hill at night. We were very intimate with a Dr. Griffin, who lived in the village, and whose two sons were our associates in many reckless sprees. One

night we dined with the Griffins, and having taken more sangaree than we ought, we returned to the hill accompanied by our young hosts. There being four of us, we thought ourselves strong enough to attack our coloured enemies, and accordingly commenced throwing stones and breaking their windows. The enemy sallied out in greater numbers than we dreamed of, and we were about to receive the reward of our audacity, when suddenly a couple of soldiers in their shirt-sleeves made their appearance, and joined in the mêlée. A coloured man was in the very act of stabbing me with a knife, when in all probability this history would never have been written, but he was knocked down by Larry O'Donnell, one of the soldiers. Several of the mulattoes had now drawn their knives, and the affair was becoming serious, when both the newly arrived assistants suddenly drew their bayonets from under their shirts, an act which not a little frightened our opponents. I now ordered a retreat to the Hill, which was effected in masterly order, and returned to barracks with our late hosts. The two men who had come so opportunely

to our assistance were the servants of Brutus and myself—O'Donnell and Clucas—the latter a Manx-man. Afraid that we might be attacked, as they knew we had been often threatened, they had broken out of barracks to meet us, and as a precaution brought their bayonets, and only just arrived in time, certainly to save my life.

Next morning, before breakfast, a posse of black and coloured men came up the Hill to the commanding officer's quarters with their complaints, showing their bruises, &c. Of course the only two delinquents could be Brutus and myself, as all the other officers were of much too mature an age to have been guilty of conduct so imprudent; but when old Mac heard of two soldiers being down the hill, with their bayonets drawn, there was a pretty kettle of fish. Brutus and myself were placed in arrest, our European servants, who were at once suspected, were put in the guardhouse, and Mac swore he would flog them before another sun rose. Through the intervention of good old Jock G——, who lent us the money, we managed to settle the complaints and pay

for all the damage that had been done; but how to get our preservers out of the scrape was the question. I at length determined to take the whole matter on my own shoulders, and wrote an official to old Mac, saying that, as senior officer of the two, I had ordered these men down the Hill to meet us, and that, therefore, I was the person to be punished, and not the men. In a short time Brutus and myself were sent for to the orderly-room, where our servants already were.

"Now, Sir," said old Mac, "you have written to say you ordered these men down the Hill, but they positively deny that you did so."

"I have only to state what I have written, that I ordered them down."

"By J——s, ye did not, Sur," exclaimed O'Donnell, "we went down of our own accord, didn't we, Clucas?"

"Of course we did," replied the Manx-man.

I repeated what I had said.

"Arrah, Sur," said O'Donnell, "what's the use of saying that?" And turning to Mac, he exclaimed, "He only wants to save our backs, and what the devil is three hundred! We can take it, can't we, Manx?"

"Of course we can," replied Manx.

It was no use, the men could not be tried, and to do Mac justice, I don't think he would have wished to do so. They were released, but directed to be no longer our servants. I was kept in arrest, and the whole circumstance reported to the Governor, and did I not catch it both personally and in orders? But I got the men off, and that was all I cared about. A few months ago Clucas* drove me to the steamer in Douglas, Isle of Man, and we had a long talk about this affair that occurred forty odd years ago. O'Donnell, who was long afterwards a good and faithful servant, rendered me a similar service on another occasion; for when a civilian at Tortola pointed a gun at me, he threw himself before the very muzzle of the deadly weapon to save me. Such is the love borne to his officer by the noble Irish soldier, when he is treated like a man. Kindness can ever conquer him, severity never. Poor Larry

* Clucas says that Captain J. C——h was in command at the time, Mac being absent. I now think he is right; but the circumstance happened as related. Captain C——h is now a Lieutenant-General. A king of good fellows he always was, and ought to have been full colonel of his regiment long ago.

emigrated to New Zealand when discharged, and I suppose is long since dead.

At this time we managed to get up a small theatre for the men in the citadel, but the acting was certainly anything but good. I remember the play was the farce of the "Apprentice," in one scene of which the members of a spouting club are assembled, and, as the Apprentice enters, a Scotchman exclaims, "Is this a dagger that I see before me?" An Irishman, taking him by the throat, shouts from Othello, "Villain, be sure ye prove my wife a w——e." Paddy Keating, who was to perform the latter part, came to my quarters in the morning before the performance, and thus addressed me:

"Arrah, Sur, shure that's a very undacent spache I have to make."

"It's always done, Paddy," I replied.

"But think of the ladies, Sur," said Paddy. "Will yer honour let me put in something of my own?"

"Certainly," said I. "How do you wish to change it?"

"Niver mind, Sur," said the representative of Othello; "lave it to me."

The night came, and in the above-mentioned scene Keating rushed at the Scotchman, and, with the voice of a Stentor, roared out:

"Villain, be shure ye prove my wife a stratewalker."

It was certainly a success, for we all nearly died from laughing, particularly as Paddy cast an eye beaming with Thespian triumph on me, as much as to say, "Haven't I kept my word?"

I had forgotten to mention Mrs. G——, the wife of the deaf Major, a very motherly old soul, upwards of sixty. She looked like a retired housekeeper, which in reality I believe she was. I don't think old G—— appreciated her very much, although she was a regular quack in medicine, and great in castor oil. Whenever she met me, generally twice a week, she would make the kindest inquiries after my health; and knowing her failing, I never acknowledged myself to be in perfect health, and in consequence always found at my quarters, on my return, a couple of bottles of castor-oil, with her compliments. At one time I had about a dozen collected,

for I took care never to taste the medicine.

Monkeys were on the Hill in numbers, and mine being a corner room, they frequently deprived me of my breakfast, but I never could bear to shoot the poor creatures.

And now the time had arrived when I should receive an answer from my parents at home, respecting my love affair, but none came, although I received one from the old Admiral, to say circumstances had occurred that rendered it necessary my engagement to his grand-daughter should be broken off, her father considering we were both much too young, and had too little money. The difference of religion he also considered an insurmountable obstacle, and he said that had he been in the Island no engagement should ever have been formed. I was thunderstruck, for dearly, dearly did I love the young lady. I had anticipated opposition from my own family, but not from hers. My steadiness was also brought into question. Wild I certainly was. However, she was sent away, and a few days after I received a letter from her, "faithful for ever," and the following verses, often and often

pressed to my lips and heart, for, wild and reckless as I was, mine was no common love :—

"Be trusting with woman, her love is a light
Unclouded, unchanging in sorrow and blight,
Tho' shame's darkest impress may blacken thy name,
Fond woman, true woman, is ever the same."

I will keep them to my dying day.

A few days after a small schooner came into Sandy Point, and when it had anchored an official was despatched on shore to old M——, directing Major G—— and myself to embark next morning for Antigua. I recognised the hand of Pater and Mater in this proceeding, which I considered arose from their opposition to my marriage, and swore I would not go; so old Mac sent for me. "I hear ye don't intend to go on board the ship," said this amiable old man. "By G—d, if ye're not ready in two hours, I'll send ye on board in irons." As I knew he was the very man to keep his word, I made a virtue of necessity, and, accompanied by old G——, Madame Castor-Oil, and a staff doctor (the most confirmed atheist I ever met), I went on board. Just before we

started we observed three men swimming to the schooner, who turned out to be my old servant Larry O'Donnell, his cousin of the same name, and a man named Brett. They clung to the vessel, and would not leave until I had shaken hands with them. We were about a mile from shore. There were plenty of sharks in the bay, and I never felt so terrified in my life as I did while I watched these kind, faithful men swimming to land, until, through a telescope, I saw that they had safely arrived. I was very sorry to hear afterwards that the unfortunate Brett that evening made use of most insubordinate language, relative to my departure, and received in consequence three hundred lashes.

I was far from comfortable on board the vessel, and soon became very sick. I shall never forget that infernal schooner as long as I live; how it pitched and rolled. So sick was I that for three days I tasted nothing but tea without sugar or milk, and thought it the most delicious liquid I had ever taken. The evening of the third day, when approaching the Antigua coast, it came on to blow tremendously, and I thought it was

all over with us. At one time our small tub was nearly buried in the waves; another time it was on the top of one, at an elevation from which I thought it could descend only to go to the bottom. But I was so sick that it was a matter of little moment to me whether we went down or not. I lay on deck the whole voyage, and never took off anything. While the gale was at its worst old G—— managed to come close to me, and said, "Get off your boots and clothes; our only chance will be to swim ashore."

"But poor Mrs. G——," I replied, "what will become of her?"

"Oh, let her shift for herself; perhaps she'll float on shore," was the conjugal answer.

"Are you a good swimmer, Major?" I said.

"Swimmer, sir! by Gad, sir, I could swim for ever; my only fear, sir, is that I might live in the water until I died of hunger."

Luckily, however, the storm subsided, and poor Mrs. G—— had no chance of floating ashore. Our atheistical doctor, I may add,

was in a most fearful fright the whole time.

We anchored in English Harbour, Antigua, about eleven o'clock that night, and, oh! the happiness of being once more on dry land; it for a time made me even forget what I had left behind at St. Kitts. The Ridge Barracks, where the head-quarters of the regiment were stationed, is about eleven or twelve miles from St. John's, the capital and seat of government, situated on a very high hill or elevation, overlooking English Harbour, a station for Her Majesty's ships of war, and a bad place every now and then for "Yellow Jack." Beyond English Harbour is the little town of Falmouth. It is rather a curious circumstance that, although I served upwards of six years in the West Indies and South America—for Demerara and Berbice must not be confounded with the islands, being part of the American continent—I never saw a case of yellow fever, and, what is still more strange, during the whole eleven years the corps remained in the tropics, no case ever occurred in it. I may also mention, as being rather against the prevalent idea of the unhealthiness of the islands, that,

although at different times serving in Barbadoes, St. Kitts, Antigua, Tortola, Demerara, and Berbice, I was never present at an officer's funeral, nor did any officer die at any of these stations while I was there. During the eleven years' service the regiment lost but five officers and two hundred and eighty-three men. Among the latter were many violent deaths, both by the law and otherwise. Two of the officers were old worn-out men, two died from a too great partiality for the bottle, and the other, after having got drenched with rain, remained the whole evening in his wet clothes, and died in a few days of fever brought on by his own rashness. With the exception of epidemics now and then, I considered the islands anything but unhealthy, and it was perfectly wonderful, considering the reckless lives led by the youngsters in my time, and the quantity of sangaree and brandy-and-water imbibed by them, that they escaped as they did.

There is a story told of an old general officer, who had served many years in the West Indian Islands, being asked by an old

gentleman whose son was about to proceed to them with his regiment, "How he should live? what he should eat and drink?" &c.

"I will tell you the circumstances attendant on my regiment going to the West Indies," replied the veteran. "We embarked about thirty officers; I should say half were water-drinkers, and half wine. The water-drinkers are all dead, and I am the last of the wine-drinkers." But I do not agree with the general. I never had the slightest illness during the time of my service, although I no doubt richly deserved to have had; and what I have stated relative to the health of the regiment will bear me out as far as we were concerned. In one fortnight at Kurrachee in Scinde we lost three hundred and eighty-three men, women, and children from cholera, and, strange to say, not a single officer. One died about six weeks after the fatal disease broke out, but it was not cholera that killed him.

My great amusement on the Ridge was grouper-fishing and hunting, and shooting the wild goats, with which the ravines and hills about the place abound. There was excellent fishing, the groupers sometimes weigh-

ing sixty and seventy pounds, and delicious eating they were. A shark would often take the bait, and generally, after a severe struggle, get off with line and hook; but on two occasions we (poor Corporal Morris and myself) succeeded in landing the tiger of the sea. The sad fate of poor Morris will be told hereafter.

The following incident will show, I may say, what a straw even may do in saving a man's life or limb. Shortly before we relieved the 93rd Highlanders, a man of that regiment had sworn deadly vengeance against the adjutant. Paraded for picket, he had loaded his musket, and a messenger had gone to the mess-room to inform the officer that the picket was ready for his inspection, when, from some sudden whim or other, he said, "B——d, like a good fellow, go and see the picket for me." B——d went, and, the moment he approached, the soldier, thinking it was the adjutant, raised his musket, and fired. B——d fell, shot through the shoulder. His life was a long time despaired of, but he ultimately recovered, with the total loss of his arm. Smith, the intended murderer, was

executed on the Ridge; he was a Highlander, and a splendid-looking man.

In my regiment, such a thing as attempting the life of an officer had never occurred in the memory of the oldest officer or soldier; but I am aware that at Antigua such an incident would have occurred but for the circumstance of a well beloved one twice stepping accidentally in front of the intended victim, when the would-be assassin, a soldier named McCann, afraid of injuring one against whom he had no enmity, restrained himself from firing, and thus in all probability McIntyre's life was saved. Twenty-five years after an officer of the regiment, proceeding from Bombay to Western Australia, was one morning, on arriving at Perth, waited upon by a very respectable old gentleman with eye-glass, gold watch, chain, &c., who sent up his card, the name on which was McCann. He made many kind inquiries after the regiment and myself, and said he had a son in it, who had run away and enlisted, and asked my friend to write to me about him, which he did. His son, a very fine handsome young fellow, was killed by my side at

Jhansi, shot through the stomach. The officer who so providentially stepped between McIntyre and the respectable-looking old gentleman, with the chain, watch, &c., was poor T——e, a nice gentlemanly fellow from Liverpool, who is long since dead.

About this time a few American Thespians, wandering through the islands, came to English Harbour and commenced their performances in a small house or barn they had erected. Going down one night by myself, I was without the slightest provocation attacked by some coloured men, named Farinella, who bore a very bad character in that vicinity, when, had it not been for the assistance of two or three artillerymen and Corporal Norris, I should have been half murdered, as it was I felt for some days the injuries I received.

A short time after this the Americans applied for permission to perform in the barracks, and obtained it. A number of coloured civilians were among the spectators; after the performance they were returning home, when they were attacked and dreadfully beaten by a large number of soldiers. These unfortunate men who were

mistaken for the Farinellas, would in all probability have been murdered, had not some of the men discovered their mistake and saved their lives; unfortunately they turned out to be men employed by the Engineer department. It was a cowardly and savage attack, and there could be no defence for it. Captain Lancey, commanding the Engineers, offered a reward of fifty pounds to any soldier who would identify the assailants, but he might have offered a thousand with the same result. A court of inquiry was held, and the three men who had saved the poor fellows, and who it appears were known to them, were examined at the Court, but although it was a bright moonlight night and there were nearly one hundred soldiers concerned in the outrage, they could not identify one of their comrades. The offer of the reward was posted up in each barrack-room, and for a long time after, drunken men, when taken to the guard-house, would shout out, "Who wants fifty pounds, who's the boy will turn informer for the red goold?" I was very much annoyed about it myself, as it came

out in the evidence of the sufferers that it was in revenge for my being attacked that the affair had taken place.

I have before mentioned a Corporal Norris, the right hand man of the Grenadiers, who stood six feet four in height and was of gigantic proportions. With the strength of a lion he had the temper of a lamb, and no soldier was so liked both by officers and men. He was my constant companion on my fishing and shooting excursions. One Sunday evening about six o'clock, I was speaking to him at the corner of the Grenadier Barracks, which was only separated from the officers' quarters by a distance of twenty yards. I had told him to call me at gunfire next morning for grouper fishing. In the act of turning away from him I heard a shot, and the exclamation of "O God!" and upon looking round saw poor Norris a corpse upon the ground, and another Grenadier, a splendid-looking young man, with his musket in his hand. He threw down the gun and said, "I did it by the vestment of the Immaculate Virgin, I've done it." The soldiers rushed out and seized him, and but for the

interference of myself and one or two other officers he would have been torn to pieces on the spot by his infuriated comrades. His name was Lowry, he was the left hand man of the Grenadiers, and was always considered a sober, well-behaved man. It appeared that Norris and he were great friends, and although from the expression made use of by Lowry, when in his madness he committed the dreadful deed, you would have thought him a Roman Catholic, such was not the case, both the victim and his destroyer being not only Protestants but Orangemen. Norris had been corporal of the canteen, and his orders were when he considered any man had taken sufficient liquor, not to allow him to remain in the canteen. Lowry had come under this category, and had in kindness been sent away that morning from the canteen by Norris. He left it in a rage, as many men under the influence of liquor would do, and there is no doubt, fell into the hands of a scoundrel named Morissey, who had a bitter hatred for Norris, and who never left Lowry until he had plied him with liquor, and made him become the murderer of his friend, comrade, and countryman.

Next morning before the Coroner's inquest took place, I went to see Lowry, who was then sober. Never did I see so horror-stricken a man. He wept like a child, and declared he knew nothing of what had occurred until the morning. At the inquest he went twice into a kind of fit, and was fully committed for murder and given over to the civil power of St. Johns. I often went to see him, and if ever there was a sincere penitent it was that man. He told me he did not wish to live, that he had killed in his mad frenzy the best friend he had in the world, and a brother Orangeman, but he would give me no information about Morissey. His answer to all my questions was "what I have done I will suffer for alone." I do not think I ever saw so (I may call it) beautiful a man. He had light golden hair, and in gaol he had allowed it to grow so long, that it hung in curls down his shoulders. His face was almost perfection, and his smile the sweetest I ever saw in a man—for he would smile when he talked to me of another world, and his meeting there with his murdered friend. I never saw a

condemned man more resigned to his fate. In appearance he always reminded me of the pictures we have seen of our Saviour, with his golden locks flowing down his back; and an old soldier, who called upon me a few days ago, made use of the same expression in speaking of him.

He was tried at St Johns, found guilty and condemned to be hanged; but his youth, he was only twenty-two, former good conduct, and gentle appearance so won upon the jury that they recommended him to mercy, and he was reprieved, but only to be hanged after a twelvemonth had elapsed from the time of his trial and condemnation. I never heard of a more cruel proceeding.

Meantime poor Norris was buried, and at his funeral there was not a dry eye among officers or men. I remember one young Grenadier, named Hickey, flinging himself into the grave as the pioneers were about to close it up. There was no religious feeling there, for Hickey was a Catholic and dearly loved his Protestant comrade. Such a thing as sectarian feeling was unknown in the Regiment, although at one time there had

been an Orange Lodge in the corps, which had been, however, most properly suppressed for years. At the time I speak of, I don't think we had one hundred and fifty Protestants in the whole regiment.

A small detachment of a West India Corps was stationed on a hill opposite the Ridge by English Harbour, and was commanded by one of the most comical geniuses I ever came across, poor Paddy K——h. For drinking, for fighting, for anything he was certainly the broth of a boy. Although considerably past forty, there was no youngster in the island so full of fun and lark as Paddy. He almost lived with us, and was the life and soul of the mess. Some years before, when in the Ceylon Corps, he had been forced into a duel by another officer, a professed duellist, named B——, and at the first shot B—— fell shot through the heart. Although the court-martial that took place acquitted K—— of all blame in the transaction, yet the inborn kindness of his heart made him often bitterly feel what had occurred, and I have seen him suddenly, in the midst of the laugh and song, burst out crying and rush

out of the room. I think it was this kind of remorse that made him fly to the bottle to drown care. Poor K——h, you were long remembered in the corps, and deeply were you regretted when we heard of your melancholy end. In one of his fits of inebriety, he fell out of a high window and broke his back, only living for a couple of hours afterwards.

While the band was performing one Sunday evening, our little kettle-drummer, Jamie Brown, dropped dead, playing on his instrument perfectly in tune to the moment when he fell down, cut off thus suddenly by disease of the heart.

About this time a draft arrived from England, and dear old Major J. Barrett came out to command the regiment. There were very few court-martials then, not more than could be positively avoided; and when flogging was resumed, I never saw a man in such a rage. He wrote a letter to Macdonald about it, expressing his astonishment and disgust. I read the letter myself, but he might as well have written to the Man in the Moon for all Tiger Mac cared.

About this time I was witness of a ludicrous scene. A young soldier of the West India regiment was tried by court-martial for attempting to stab the European sergeant of the detachment, and, it being a garrison affair, our drummers had to inflict the punishment ordered. The young black fellow, who did not look more than eighteen or nineteen, must have been a recruit, and fresh from a captured slaver. He was beautifully built, but slight to a degree, and appeared, as he was, a perfect savage. He was very quiet when tied to the triangle, but the first lash he received he gave a roar and a bound that nearly brought the halberds to the ground. After two or three more lashes, he had absolutely—such was the litheness and activity of his frame—managed to turn round his face almost to the drummers; at the same time the yells might have been heard miles off. It was therefore necessary to tie him up again, and in doing so our old drum-major, Coppin, happened to bring his thumb somewhat near the face of the infuriated black, who in an instant seized it with his teeth, and gave it a terrible gnawing, the black

fellow holding to it like grim death. Old Coppin, while pommelling the black with his other hand, kept roaring with pain, and exclaiming, "Oh Holy J——s! let go of me thumb, ye murdering villain, ye—— Oh, boys! will yez see me massacreed this way? Let go, ye ruffian of the world!" The drummers were in such fits of laughter that they could hardly attempt to release him, and officers and men were equally amused. After a great deal of difficulty Coppin's thumb was taken out of the man's mouth, but bitten so severely that at one time it was thought it would be necessary to amputate it. Major Barrett, finding it impossible to proceed with the punishment, directed blacky to be taken down, after he had only received a few lashes, but the poor drum-major remembered it for many a day. I never saw poor Barrett lose an opportunity, if he could, of taking a man down from the halberds.

In the regiment was a soldier named Boyle, a man who seldom misconducted himself, though he was looked upon as half knave, half fool, but was, at any rate, a sneaking, dirty fellow. At the foot of the Ridge

Barracks lived a respectable French merchant from Martinique. In some way or other Boyle found out, or thought he had found out, that the Frenchman had a good deal of money in his house. One night, after tattoo, he broke out of barracks, taking with him his musket, and two pouch-belts filled with ammunition. Having approached the Frenchman's house, instead of going boldly into it and robbing him like a man, he stood about fifty yards from it, loaded his gun, and commenced fusillading the windows, doors, &c. The poor Frenchman was of course afraid to come out, and Boyle had all the fun to himself, but not for very long, for the picket on the Ridge, hearing the firing, came down, surrounded Master Boyle, and took him up a prisoner to the barracks. The Frenchman next morning so interceded for the rascal that, instead of being tried by a general court-martial, as he richly deserved, he was tried by a regimental one, and sentenced to receive three hundred. Unfortunately for Master Boyle, some little time before he had thought proper to peach upon some of the drummers for going out of barracks after hours, which

certainly he never would have done, had he anticipated falling under their tender mercies; for the severity of the punishment, in a great measure, depends upon the forbearance of the handlers of the cat. Master Boyle received the most severe flogging I ever witnessed, and was one of the few instances I ever saw of a soldier showing the craven; his yells and shouts proving plainly how little he appreciated the attentions of his friends the sheepskin players.

Time passed away, and the regiment was ordered to Demerara and Berbice. The night previous to the embarkation, Boyle, with his musket and two pouches of ammunition, broke out of barracks, and again proceeded to pay his French friend a visit. As before, he commenced to fire into the house, and after having made a target of it for some time, he went into the stable, where there was a fine grey mare, to the head of which he put the muzzle of the gun and shot her dead. The picket again came down and made him prisoner. This time he was given over to the civil power, and to our surprise, and no doubt to his own astonishment, was tried at

St. John's and sentenced to be hanged; and hanged he was.

Previous to the execution taking place, a letter was received from him by the colonel, which was read to the regiment. While exhorting his comrades to take warning by his sad fate, he said, "Tell my comrade, Jeremiah Timmons, that unless he changes his course of life, it will end like mine, on the gallows." His prophecy proved a true one.

About this time an outbreak of the slaves was feared in Tortola, and Bill S——e, a brother subaltern, was sent there on detachment. A curious fellow was the said Bill, and I shall have plenty to say respecting him by-and-by. One little incident evincing his presence of mind, so to call it, took place before he left.

There was a very nice place for bathing, completely cut off by a reef of rocks from the sea, and perfectly free from sharks. S——e and myself went generally to bathe there together every evening. It was about two hundred yards in width, and we generally swam across and back again. One evening in particular we had both started together,

and had gone about sixty or seventy yards, when suddenly S——e turned round and made for the shore at his utmost speed. As I knew him pretty well, I thought there was something up, and accordingly followed his example. We both reached the shore at the same time, and being rather savage I said, "What the devil did you mean by turning round and making for the shore?"

"Oh, by Jove, I saw a shark's fin not ten yards from you, and I was in hopes he'd employ himself with you till I got to land."

This was frank at least, if not kind. There must have been good ground for his alarm, however, for next day a shark about eight feet long was caught by some fishermen in the bathing ground. There having been some severe gales recently, the monster had no doubt been washed over the reef. I need not say I did not bathe with my kind friend again.

I remained for about a year on the Ridge; what would I have given to have had a peep at St. Kitts again! I had only received one letter for a long time, and that was not very consolatory. The young lady's parents

tried to make up a match between a gentleman named F——, the only other Catholic in the island, and my dear girl, and she was evidently persecuted a good deal on his account. However I still had hopes all would come right, but it never did; and now I was suddenly ordered to Tortola, to relieve my friend S——e, of bathing notoriety, who had managed to get into hot water with the people of the Island. Antigua is very subject to earthquakes, and we had several shocks during my residence there, but nothing of the severe nature I afterwards felt on my second visit to St. Kitts.

Our soldiers made a great deal of money by rubbing up the petrified stones found in almost every rivulet. It requires a good deal of labour to do this and bring them to perfection, but when brought to that state they are most beautiful, exhibiting every hue of the rainbow. I have seen fifty men at one time in their shirt-sleeves, and the perspiration rolling off them in streams, engaged in this business. They select a large rough rock, and against this the petrified stone is forcibly rubbed until it gets a perfectly

smooth surface, when, by some other process, the veins of the stone are brought to light. The manual labour is excessive, but I have known a hard-working, industrious fellow make sixty or seventy dollars in a month, particularly if he was lucky enough to hit upon some fine specimens of the petrifactions.

Sir Patrick R——s, who was at this time Governor of Antigua, lived at St. John's, where he gave one or two nice balls, which was the only gaiety I enjoyed while on the Ridge. There was not the same sociality among the society that we experienced in St. Kitts, nor anything like the number of beautiful girls I had seen in that island, or Nevis. Upon one occasion, at a ball in Government House, I was introduced to an exceedingly pretty girl, with a pair of the most beautiful, melancholy-looking, liquid black eyes I ever looked at, with whom I danced the Spanish waltz dance. She had very little to say for herself, and appeared to me to have some fearful weight on her mind. I could not help remarking to myself what an exceedingly large waist she had, though it was so well

concealed that, unless you clasped it as I did in the waltz, it was otherwise hardly perceptible. On speaking to the gentleman at whose house I was staying about my pretty partner, and her melancholy looks and manner, he said, "Yes; she is a very pretty, nice girl, and last year was one of the gayest of the gay. She is to be married next month, and, if rumour says true, the sooner she is the better." Two months afterwards, having been married about half the time, she was confined of a fine boy. The father, a young Spaniard who taught music, but was not the husband, had seduced her during his lessons, and the poor unfortunate girl committed suicide before her baby was a month old.

I took my departure from St. John's in a small fishing-boat for Tortola, where I arrived after a sail of thirty hours, two black men and a boy composing the skipper and crew. On our passage we caught some of the finest and largest barracouta I had ever seen, a fish, by-the-by, it is not very pleasant to come into contact with when bathing.

There are no venomous reptiles in Antigua with the exception of the centipede and

scorpion. It is strange that, while Barbadoes, St. Kitts, Tortola, and other islands are totally free from dangerous and deadly snakes, St. Lucia is a perfect nursery of serpents of the worst description. The mortality from their bites is almost incredible. Some years ago an officer in the guard-room was bitten by one of them. In Martinique there is also a most venomous snake called, I think, the "Fer-de-lance," whose bite is certain death. Jamaica, I am told, is also free from these dangerous reptiles, but Trinidad the reverse.

CHAPTER VII.

TORTOLA—EXPECTED OUTBREAK OF SLAVES—MY SUBALTERN, JACK DOWMAN—LARRY O'DONNELL AGAIN—BILL SEMPLE'S PRANKS—BATH FOR A MILITIA OFFICER—A DANISH IRISHMAN—DISTURBANCE—THE PRESIDENT'S FLAG PULLED DOWN—OUTBREAK OF MILITIA—LAUGHABLE MISTAKE—ATTEMPT ON MY LIFE—VISIT TO ST. THOMAS—DANISH OFFICERS—EMBARKATION FOR ST. KITTS.

TORTOLA, one of the Virgin Islands, is about twenty miles from St. Thomas, the principal Danish colony in the West Indies, and a place of great trade with all nations. The harbour of Tortola is a very fine, large, spacious one. The town is situated close to the sea, and overhanging it is an enormous range of mountains. The climate is healthy, and the planters are a most kind and hospitable race. A conspiracy had been discovered among the slaves, and so far had it gone that every white lady in

the island had been apportioned to certain blackies. However, there are traitors in every community, and one of them just peached in time for the President, Mr. I——, to send and get a company of our regiment, under the command of Bill S——e, to assist them. Martial law was proclaimed, and was in force when I arrived. The Danish Government sent over from St. Thomas two hundred of their soldiers, who were quartered in the same temporary barracks as our men. They were composed of almost every nation under the sun, except British, the great majority being Germans. Two Scotchmen and an Englishman had a short time before formed part of their number, but had all died of delirium tremens from drink.

I was told that our men and the Danes fraternised most amicably, particularly in the liquor line, but not one man understood a word the other said. They remained in the island until everything was quiet, when they returned to St. Thomas, with thanks for the assistance they had rendered. Many slaves who had taken part in the conspiracy were apprehended, and, to guard against any

such peril in the future, a coloured militia was established, the officers being composed in a great measure of the white and Creole gentlemen, with a few whose complexions were of a deeper dye. I shall have more to say about the latter shortly, for, of all the unmitigated villains, the coloured men were the worst I ever met with.

Our fishing craft had no sooner anchored than a small boat put off from the shore, and pulled towards us. It was manned by soldiers, among whom was my old faithful servant, Larry O'Donnell. The company at Tortola had been sent from St. Kitts. I need not say how delighted Larry was to see me again, and with what cheerful alacrity he at once installed himself as my major-domo. I had a subaltern under my command, honest Jack D——n,* of whom I shall have more to say anon; but my bathing friend S——e had already taken his departure. The island being under martial law, the military were paramount, and I, not yet twenty years of age, suddenly found myself invested with great authority and responsibility, though I much

* Poor Jack died two or three years ago, one of the Captains at Chelsea Hospital. Earth never received a better fellow.

fear my position did not entail the proper steadiness required in a representative of majesty, as the result will show.

The day after my arrival I dined with the President, a tall, handsome, and most gentlemanly old man, with that native nobility of appearance which I have often remarked in members of the old Creole families in the West Indies, and certainly a more aristocratic-looking person than Mr. I—— you would seldom see. There were several other gentry of the island at dinner, and close to me sat one young man whose conversation was a constant repetition of the praises of his father. "My father did this, and my father did that." He was the King of Tortola, and there had been no one like him since in the island. He repeated these laudatory expressions so often that, after dinner, I asked a very fine-looking man, a Scotchman, named Rogers, a Major in the Militia, who he was, adding that I supposed, from the eulogies of the son, his father must have been a most eminent man.

"Deed," replied the Scotchman, "his feyther certainly held a vara elevated position

in the island, for he was hangit for boiling a woman slave in a cauldron."

I was, as may be supposed, not a little astonished at this discovery. In 1811, as I was informed, the Hon. Mr. H——, a member of the Council of the Island of Tortola, and a man of the first family, was tried for the most horrid cruelty to his slaves, and for having in one instance absolutely boiled a female slave alive. The evidence was clear; he was convicted and executed. My new acquaintance was this man's son, and although he of course could not be held responsible for his father's guilt, yet, as they say in Scotland, it showed a lamentable want of common sense not to let "that flea stick in the wa'."

I now received a history of my friend Bill S——'s capers while he held command in the island. Notwithstanding my bathing experience, I must say that a more good-hearted fellow never existed; but he was amazingly reckless. The coloured Militia were a most insolent, overbearing, insulting set of fellows, looking like pirates and murderers, and no doubt some of them, if not

all, would with opportunity have been both. There were two brothers in particular of the name of Martin, both carpenters, who had managed to get commissions in the Militia. One of these men had picked a quarrel with S——, who I believe was not to blame, and had made use of the grossest language to him. The fellow was passing by the barrack gate, when he was observed by S——, who sent a soldier to say he wished to speak to him. He swaggered into the yard, and going up to S—— said in the most insolent manner, "What the hell do you want with me?" What S——'s intentions may have been, I know not, but he was naturally indignant at being addressed in such a way, and the sight of an immense turtle trawl, as it was called, about six feet deep in the middle of the yard, suggested a suitable mode of punishing his insolent assailant. Calling over two or three stout soldiers who were lounging about, he desired them to pitch the Militia officer into it, then to pull him out and pitch him in again until he acknowledged he had had enough of it, and desired them to stop. The men, wishing

no better fun, obeyed these orders with right good will, and notwithstanding his yells and roars, Martin was not only ducked a dozen times, but rather roughly treated by his tormentors, and eventually kicked out of the gate by S——. Summoned before the civil court, S—— got off with a small fine, in consequence, as they say in Ireland, of "the aggravation;" but from that time a deadly feud arose between our men and the coloured inhabitants. One of the magistrates, Colonel Stephens, had on the bench made use of some language relative to S——, not of the most gentlemanly description. The consequence was a hostile message from S——, which was accepted by the Colonel (they were great duellists in Tortola, and the original colonists must have been I think from Green Erin). S—— kept a very fine Jerusalem donkey, on which he rode out to the field of meeting, playing the "Dead March in Saul" on his flute. After the usual preliminaries the opponents fired, and S—— shot the unfortunate magistrate through the thigh, riding back on his long-eared animal to the tune of the "British

Grenadiers." It was in consequence of the many antics that S—— played that I was sent down in his place. It was, I fear, a case of the pot and the kettle; but what could be expected from two lads not twenty years of age?

The civilian surgeon who attended the troops was a Danish Irishman, that is to say, he was born of Irish parents in the Island of Santa Cruz. A very nice fellow he was, and a regular Patlander. J. D——n, being also from the Emerald Isle, was a great chum of the medico. A Scotch doctor engaged to a niece of the President, whose nephew was adjutant of the Militia, had applied for the appointment; but S—— had given it to Armstrong, the Dane. This had occasioned a good deal of bad feeling towards Armstrong on the part of the Scot and the adjutant.

Dining at the house of the latter one day, the wine had circulated rather freely, and it was getting towards "the sma' hours" when some remark or other, not of the most kindly character, was made relative to the Dane. It was evidently meant for the ears

of D——n who, however, being a very good-tempered fellow, took no notice of it. Remarks of a still more insulting nature were then made, when D——n, rising from his chair, said in the most gentlemanly manner,

"It is not fair, I——, to make these remarks before me, as you well know, Armstrong is a personal friend of mine, and I cannot sit and listen to them any longer."

The reply was, "I don't care a d—n whether you stay or not, I say he is an infernal low blackguard."

The Irish element in D——n was now thoroughly raised, and he replied,

"Mr. I——, you will at once retract these words."

"I'll see you d—d first," was the answer.

"Then all I have to tell you is," said D——n, "that you are no gentleman to insult a guest in your own house, and, with respect to what you have said relative to my friend, that you are an infernal liar."

D——n and myself at once left the house, and on proceeding towards the barracks we passed the President's mansion, where in the

moonlight a flag was flaunting in the air. Although well aware that next morning circumstances of a serious nature would assuredly take place, we, our youthful spirits elevated by the wine we had drunk, determined to have both flag and staff down. This feat we, with a great deal of difficulty, managed to accomplish, but unfortunately in the course of our operations the pole came down with a crash, and falling on D——n's fingers broke two of them—both on his right hand. We were obliged to knock Armstrong up, and have the fingers repaired. On telling what had taken place at I——'s house the Danish Irishman was frantic, and insisted on proceeding there at once to inflict personal chastisement on his calumniator. It was with great difficulty we prevented him doing so, and as D——n insisted that he alone should bear the brunt of the affair, he agreed to accompany us to the field as our medical man, and then go in himself for a second heat at I——. In a few minutes a gentleman arrived on the part of I——, and it was settled that we were to meet in a few hours across the bay, at the beautiful little

fighting ground which was always kept in a state of preparation, for many a Tortolian had kissed the daisies on that emerald turf.

Although a little sprung myself, I had noticed that the Scotch gentleman sent by our opponent was particularly unsteady in his gait, and very thick in his utterance. However, as he was a well-known hand in these affairs, I thought it would be all right, and that everything would be arranged properly. D——n was suffering such agony from his broken fingers, that it was quite impossible for him to hold a pistol in his right hand, and he would therefore be obliged to use his left. We remained up all night, and, as day dawned, proceeded to the field of battle. When we reached the place appointed for the encounter, there was no sign of our opponents, and we waited for nearly an hour, but as no one came, we returned home very savage at our disappointment, and, like thoughtless boys, determined to post I—— in every part of the town. No sooner said than done. A placard was written out immediately, and copies of

it made on several sheets of paper, which little Micky Noonan was despatched to stick up on several public places.

About two hours after, McCaul, the Scotchman, called in a most distracted state to inform us that after seeing us, he had fallen asleep, and, not being very sober, had forgotten the whole affair, and since he had seen us had not even communicated with his principal. He begged earnestly that the meeting might take place that evening both for his sake and I——'s, as it was now known through all the town that he had been publicly posted as a coward, and for no fault of his own. D——n also insisted on giving him the meeting, for, notwithstanding the pain of his fingers, his pluck was indomitable. It was therefore agreed that we were to meet on the old spot at five o'clock in the evening. The whole affair was now as public as the open day, and the old President, grieved although he was, allowed that it was necessary for his nephew's honour that the meeting should take place. In the present days, those ideas would be considered murderous; then they were looked upon as chivalrous.

Crossing the bay in a boat, we reached the "little bit o' turf." A prettier spot of ground for an affair of the kind, as I said before, Ireland could not produce. Surrounded on all sides by large trees and mountains, the open space was not more than sixty yards in length, and about the same in breadth. On arriving at the ground we found the place crowded with coloured Militia men, some of whom I observed had their bayonets up their sleeves. The two coloured officers, the brothers Martin, were particularly active, going about from group to group. I did not at all like the look of things, and going up to McCaul, the Scotchman, I expressed my opinion that we ought to seek some more secluded spot. His answer was that in Tortola they thought nothing of people coming to see affairs of the kind.

Twelve paces having been measured, the opponents took their ground, and, at the word fire, exchanged shots. Luckily, no harm was done on either side, and McCaul came up, saying that his friend was satisfied. Very foolishly I remarked, "I thought he would soon have enough." One of the

Martins heard me, and came up saying, "If he has had enough, I haven't, and I'll have a shot with you." I declined the honour, when he approached as if about to strike me. Instantly cocking a pistol, I swore I would blow his brains out if he laid a hand upon me. This decided conduct evidently startled him a little, but the Militia-men began to close round A——, D——n, and myself, and their bayonets were drawn out and publicly exposed. Threatening us by their gestures, the cry was raised "Throw the b—— officers into the sea," when suddenly an Irish yell was heard, and in a minute a road was cleared to us by about thirty of our men, who, armed with shillelaghs sprang out from the trees, headed by Barney Collins, a powerful Irishman. Barney, getting to my side, flourished his stick in dangerous proximity to Martin's head. It was evident that a most serious row would now take place, for our men would have little or no chance against upwards of one hundred Militia-men, nearly all armed with bayonets. I therefore ordered the men home to the barracks, while D——, A——, and myself

made our way to the boat, with cocked pistols, and recrossed to the barracks. On my arrival there, fearing a collision between the two parties on their return through the town, for the coloured men were uttering the most violent threats, I collected every man I could, about thirty, and ordering them to load with ball, proceeded towards the town to meet the soldiers who were returning. As the President's house was at the entrance of the town, I took the precaution of calling on him in order to acquaint him with my intentions, but he was not at home. So I went on at the head of my little army; and as I proceeded, I heard that several of the soldiers had been taken prisoners. A little after I entered the town, I met a man named Michael Meany, a soldier of herculean strength and ferocious appearance, whom several Militia-men were abusing, though none dared to approach him. In his hands were two immense stones, and he certainly looked a very ugly customer. He joined us, and informed me the Militia had stopped the men going to barracks. A short distance further on, I espied my enemy,

the eldest Martin, who was a very large powerful man.

I had no wish to come into collision with him, as my only object was to collect the men. I was about twenty yards in front, and observed that, as I approached Martin, he diverged towards me, and as he passed, suddenly threw the whole weight of his body against mine, and I was violently thrown to the other side of the road. Luckily I had not my sword drawn, but an avenger was at hand. The leading file, Denis Delahunty, a corporal of Grenadiers, six feet three in height, seeing the attack made upon his officer, fired at Martin, at the distance of ten paces, and then charged him with his bayonet, pinning him to the wall through his skin and coat. Never was there so narrow an escape; the ball could not have missed him by two inches, as it struck the wall close to his head, and the bayonet was within an inch of going into his body. I had just time to throw myself between him and the men, or the earthly career of Mr. Martin would then have been over. How the fellow cried and prayed for his life, which

I had no intention of taking, but only made him a prisoner. In the meantime, the officers of the Militia had all arrived in their uniform, and going among their men had managed to release the soldiers taken prisoners. The Militia had no ammunition, and were clamorous in their demands to get it from the Quartermaster. The officers had, however, too much good sense to allow any to be given to them, or there would have been a frightful contest. Colonel R— sent to me for Martin, and I gave him up; whereupon he was placed under arrest on the spot. Having a guard to plant over the commissariat in the town, the Colonel of the Militia sent to me to say, that in consequence of the great excitement prevailing, he thought I had better not put on the guard that night. I was, however, determined to do so, and with an armed party planted the guard myself; but was obliged to march to the commissariat with fixed bayonets—the sergeant of the party, Moran, having been wounded with a sword by a coloured Militia officer, who was, however,

at once made prisoner by the Colonel and Adjutant.

About four miles from the town, nearly five hundred free Africans were located. These men were Government pensioners, and formed an armed Militia of their own, with white officers. During the time of the excitement they marched in, as if for parade, headed by their Captain, D—— of the Custom House. When the coloured scoundrels saw them approaching, they cheered loudly, expecting to be joined by them, but were rather disappointed when Massa Blackee, marching through and past them, called out, "We King Billy's sodgers—we fight for buccra sodger!" and ranged themselves under my command. If resort to arms had been necessary, this was certainly a great acquisition to my strength. As, however, I anticipated no further trouble, I directed D——n to take his loyal Africans home again while I marched my own men to barracks, and went to bed to ruminate on all that had taken place.

And my ruminations were not of a very pleasant kind. Even in those days of duel-

ling, I did not feel very comfortable at all that had taken place. It is true the Militia had commenced the affair, but still I, as the officer commanding the troops, ought not to have been, I may say, the chief man in breaking the "Articles of War." However the mischief was done, and I had only to make the best of it, and put a bold face on the matter, for I was perfectly sure some report would go to the authorities at St. Kitts, and I myself was in duty bound to do something of the kind, notwithstanding the peril in which I should place my commission.

However, next morning the President requested me to meet him at Government House, and I accordingly went, determined to hold a high hand. The Colonel and two Majors of the Militia were present. To my great delight, apologies were made for the gross conduct of the Militia, and great praise was given by the officers, both for my own conduct, and for the forbearance shown by the soldiery under insults of the most galling description. They trusted I would make no report of the circumstances, as it might

occasion the disbanding of the regiment, and cause more regular troops to be sent to the island. The two coloured officers, they said, should be tried by Court-Martial, and that they then trusted the matter would end. The President said the duel was an unfortunate piece of business, but that his own nephew's conduct had brought it on, and that he alone was to blame, and that, if it came to the ears of the authorities, he should say so, and that although he knew I had infringed the *loi militaire*, he could not see how I could have acted otherwise—being the only brother officer D——n had to second him. He spoke like a kind-hearted gentleman as he was, and the affair was thus settled, and an invitation given to A——, D——n and myself to a mess dinner, at which all the officers of the Militia were to be present save our coloured friends.

The dinner was given in due course, and everything passed off in the most friendly manner. The two Martins were tried by court-martial, and broken, besides being sentenced to six months' imprisonment each. But I came forward and interceded for them,

and their sentences, at my request, were remitted.

Notwithstanding the friendly settlement of this matter, the old animosity prevailed among the lower order to such an extent, that when either D——n or myself dined in the country we had to bring several armed men with us to see us home, and on one occasion, passing through the town, a window was thrown open, and a voice exclaimed,

"Let me have a shot at that d—d villain."

A gun in the bright moonlight was pointed at me, and I thought my hour was come, when Larry O'Donnell threw himself before me, and shouted out,

"Now fire, ye cowardly scoundrel, if you like."

A magistrate, who was with us, rode to the door and called out. The gun was then withdrawn, but we could never find out who was the person who threatened to fire, although almost positive it was one of the Martins.

I may as well conclude my account of this quasi-civil war by the following. On returning to St. Kitts, the Governor, Colonel

Nicolls, late of the Connaught Rangers—a fine old soldier he was, and a kind-hearted man—sent for me and the officer commanding the wing of the regiment. He asked me about the whole transaction, and I told him the story from beginning to end. He said he was happy to have heard all the circumstances from me, which perfectly coincided with a letter he had received from President I—— and Colonel R——, who had spoken most highly of the way in which I had acted (a great deal more so than I deserved, if the truth had been known) when placed in very difficult circumstances. The duel, he admitted, was an awkward affair, but, kindly patting me on the head, he concluded by saying, "We can't put old heads on young shoulders. I shall not make any report of the circumstances to Barbadoes; but you have had a pretty narrow escape, my boy." And, by Jove, I was pretty sure I had.

Having received an invitation from the officers of the garrison at St. Thomas to pay them a visit, D——n and myself went there for three or four days. We received a most hospitable welcome from them, and

although they had no regular mess of their own, they established one during our stay. Strange to say, there was not one native Danish officer among them except the chaplain, who had only arrived a few days before from Copenhagen, and did not speak or understand one word of English. There was a very fine-looking Swede, about six feet four in height, two or three Germans, and a perfect "Sancho Panza" of a little Frenchman, brim full of fun and merriment, and all, save the Padre, spoke English like natives.

We had all assembled in the temporary mess-room, and had taken our seats at the dinner table, when the chaplain, a tall, handsome, gentlemanly-looking man, stood up, and filling his glass with wine, looked over to me, and nodding his head with the utmost gravity, said, "G—d d—n your eyes, Sare," drank the contents of the glass, and sat down. I was a little taken aback, but looking at the mirthful countenances of his comrades, I saw at once they had been playing a trick upon his reverence. The Frenchman had employed his time that day in teaching him the words above mentioned,

and telling him they were the greatest compliment he could pay us. The poor parson had fallen into the trap, but seeing everyone roaring with laughter, he began to think he had said something absurd, and getting very red in the face, evidently asked an explanation from Monsieur, which I suppose was given, as he got up, said something to us in Danish by way of an apology, good-naturedly punching his informant in the side, and joining in the laugh. We remained at "Polly Millar's," a well-known hotel in those days, and went to two dances during our stay. The girls were all either English or natives of St. Thomas, and so we had no need of interpreters.

We breakfasted one morning in the Fort, with the Danish commandant, who had a most beautiful wife, a native of Santa Cruz, but a perfect Englishwoman in appearance, manners, and language. The Danish soldiers were dressed like our men, in red, but they had a slounging lubberly appearance, very different from the smart military carriage of British soldiers. They, however, seemed in one respect not unlike them, and that was

in their partiality for liquor, as I came across plenty of drunken men, and saw one fine-looking young sergeant, who might have been taken anywhere for a Briton, placed in arrest by our friend the Swede, for bringing liquor into barracks, a very common crime, he told me, among their men, as it is among our own in the Colonies.

We returned to Tortola very much delighted with our trip: and the kindness we had experienced, and found the detachment in perfect order, under the command of Sergeant Moran, who informed us that everything had been perfectly quiet since our departure.

Among the residents in Tortola from whom we received great attention, very often visited, and at whose house in the country we often remained, was a son or grandson, I forget which, of the celebrated Dr. Lettsom. A laughable circumstance occurred one day. In Tortola, goat's meat is very much used, from the scarcity of beef and mutton. Both D—— and myself were very fond of shooting, but there is very little game in Tortola of any description, and our principal amusement

in the fowling line was taking long shots from our windows with ball at the pelicans, which were very numerous, or shooting with small shot the guard fish and barracoutas, that used to swim under our windows. One day Lettsom called upon me, and said, "I'll give you something to shoot; there are a lot of infernal goats that are constantly trespassing on my cane-fields, destroying the young canes and playing the devil with the crops. I don't like to shoot them myself, but if you'll come out and do so I shall be obliged." No sooner said than done. We engaged to dine with him next day, and bring our guns. After dinner accordingly we sallied out to look for the goats, and after searching for some time we discovered the trespassers in a young cane-field. "By Jove, here they are," said Lettsom, "don't leave one of them alive." We accordingly let fly, and managed to bag three fine milch goats and three kids. Lettsom sent for a couple of donkeys and two black boys, whom he enjoined to secrecy, and told them when night came on to drive them to the barracks and leave them there. Next morning we left for home, our host

promising to dine with us the following day.

We asked some friends to meet him, and had some capital soup and stews made from our victims, and when the appointed time came we waited dinner for our friend, but hour after hour elapsed and he never made his appearance, so we had to finish our meal without him. Next morning, however, at breakfast-time, he rode into the barrack yard, and then out came the whole business.

"By Jove!" said Lettsom, "I've got into a pretty mess. After you left the day before yesterday, Mrs. Lettsom said to me, 'I can't make out what has become of our goats, they have not been seen since yesterday morning, and I have been obliged to send and buy milk for breakfast. They could hardly be stolen, and if they are I don't know what the children will do, for they are three of the finest milch ones in the Island, and two of them were sent to me, you may recollect, by my sister at Santa Cruz, being of a very superior breed.' You might have knocked me down," continued Lettsom, "with a feather. Grim forebodings came over me that the animals I had taken such trouble to

have assassinated were my own wife's goats, and such was the case. I have left the children crying for their milk, and as to my wife, I shall not be able to see her face for a month; so I am coming to spend a couple of days with you, and shall indite her an epistle, and pray for forgiveness, and must now send off to Santa Cruz for a new batch."

We now received orders to embark for St. Kitts on board the old 'Duke of York,' when relieved by a detachment of the 36th. Very sorry were we indeed to leave Tortola; and more particularly so when we understood Demerara and Berbice were to be our final destination. However we had nothing to do but obey orders. One morning the 'Duke' came into harbour, but on disembarking the 36th, we were told they would not be ready to receive us until the following morning. The two detachments were thus located for a short time together in the barracks, and Captain King and Ensign Bouchier were dining with D—— and myself, and quietly smoking our cigars and drinking our brandy and water, when about nine o'clock a man ran over to us, calling out "there was

bloody murder going on between the two detachments." We all ran to the scene of disturbance as fast as we could, the distance between the officers and men's quarters being several hundred yards, and sure enough there was a regular Irish scrimmage, which, however, had nearly terminated before we arrived. So severe, however, had been the affray, that next morning upwards of twenty of the 36th were obliged to be taken into hospital, the colour-sergeant of the detachment having his nose broken. An investigation took place, and I was happy to find that K—— acknowledged his men to be the aggressors, and was of opinion that they had only got what they deserved. The men of my regiment were, at the time I speak of, noted for their immense size and strength, and strange to say, after a lapse of so many years, they have not very much degenerated. When landing in Bombay years after, they were called the "Irish giants." The only corps I ever met in those days to come near them were the "Borderers," and they decidedly, in point of men, were clippers.

When we left Tortola, the gentlemen of the Island certainly regretted our departure.

I have never met any person from the Island since, except a coloured boatswain on board one of the Company's ships of war in India. This was nearly twenty years after the occurrences I have mentioned, and although a boy at the time, he perfectly recollected the *émeute*, and the Africans marching down; events which, he said, were often afterwards spoken of in Tortola.

After a voyage of five days, once more I beheld thee, Brimstone Hill. How my heart beat when I once more trod thy strand, thou little village of Sandy Point! When I reached the "Citadel," I again looked with eagerness for the two cocoa-nut trees I had so often gazed upon before in days gone by. I was still as much in love as ever, perhaps more so; but it was not to be, for when my opportunity came I threw it away. But mine is not a love-story, and therefore I will not say anything more about it at present, as my male readers might be tempted to exclaim, "D—n the fellow! what do we care about love scenes of nearly forty years ago?" when the actors are now, in all probability, grandpapas and grandmammas.

CHAPTER IX.

BRIMSTONE HILL AGAIN—GREAT CHANGES—OLD MAJOR GIBSON AND HIS GARRISON ORDERS—EFFECTS OF THE MANCHINEAL TREE—EARTHQUAKE IN BASSETERRE—A QUADRILLE SCATTERED—CHARLIE MURRAY AND HIS PROPOSALS—HIS ESCAPE—CAUGHT AT LAST—EMBARKATION FOR BARBADOES—OLD GIBSON AGAIN—BARBADOES—BRUTUS H——. —CURIOUS COURT-MARTIAL—HIGHLAND PIPERS *versus* O'KELLY, THE IRISH PIPER.

I FOUND some changes on Brimstone Hill since my departure from it, nearly two years having elapsed. Old Mac had gone to Barbadoes, as evidence on a court-martial by which Brutus Emilius was to be tried for certain offences. I will shortly relate the circumstances of this curious military tribunal.

Old Major Gibson had returned from Antigua, and being senior officer, held command of the garrison. The wing of the

regiment was in command of Captain Sidley, formerly adjutant of the depôt, who had been pitted against me in the feat of telling the names of the men at the depôt, and only losing by forgetting the name of his own servant. There were one or two other additions to the wing, including Charlie Murray, a jolly subaltern, a great ladies' man, but too fond of the bottle. When under its influence he was invariably in the habit of proposing to some girl or other, and in consequence got himself into scrapes innumerable.

My old friends, Dr. and Mrs. W——s, had left, and been relieved by another Scotch doctor, wife and daughter, whom I shall call Forbes.

I found on my arrival that there was not the best feeling in the garrison. I have already mentioned that the late Governor, Colonel Maxwell, and Judge Pickwood were at variance, and that the latter had been suspended. On the arrival of the new Governor, Colonel Nicolls, he had adopted the ideas and feelings of his predecessor, and the consequence was that the military had become partizans, and taken different sides. Old

Major Gibson, or, "By Gad, Sir," as we used to call him, had become a violent anti-Pickwood, and to such a length had he gone that he issued a garrison order, insisting that no officer should dine at Judge Pickwood's. This of course we only laughed at, and he placed two officers in arrest for disobeying his order, a step which brought a letter from Judge Pickwood to the Governor, and of course old "By Gad, Sir," went to the wall, besides being sent to Coventry by the officers of the wing, who were all on the Judge's side.

I now experienced the effect of the manchineal poison. Riding one evening into the country, it came on to rain with a violence only known in tropical climates, and getting under a large tree for shelter, I remained there during the time the shower lasted. Of course I was not altogether sheltered, and the water dropping from the leaves of the tree came down on my face. I rubbed it off with my gloved hand, and experienced no ill effects until I reached home, when my eyes began to feel very sore, and before bed-time I was perfectly blind, a state in which I continued for nearly a week, and it was a fort-

night before I quite recovered from the effects of the poison. The rain had become poisonous from contact with the leaves of the manchineal tree under which I had sought shelter.

The fruit of the tree is a small apple resembling the crab in England. I recollect Ethelstone, of the 25th, coming to Antigua with some recruits, having just arrived in the West Indies. Strolling by the sea, he observed some of these apples, pulled one, and ate part of it. He came up to the Ridge feeling very ill, and told me what he had done. I knew at once it must have been a manchineal crab which he had eaten. He was put into the doctor's hands, but the poison was nearly fatal, and I believe nothing but his immense strength and powerful constitution carried him through a long and painful illness.

A public ball taking place in the Court House, Basseterre, Jack D—— and myself resolved to go, and having an invite to stay at the house of a Scotch friend, named Grey, we arrived there to dinner about six o'clock. After dinner we proceeded to our bedroom

to dress. I had not been there more than a few minutes, when suddenly I felt the house shake, the noise on the stairs I could only compare to that of a number of armed men rushing up together. I could not make out at first what it was, but from the screams and cries in the streets it soon became evident that a very severe shock of earthquake had taken place. On running downstairs we found such to have been the case, and that several small houses adjoining ours had fallen, among the rest some wine stores. Wine, whisky, brandy, rum, &c., were flowing in the gutter; while black men and women were endeavouring to catch the liquor with every species of utensil. It was thought, of course, the ball would not go on, but it did, though when we arrived there were not more than a dozen ladies and twenty gentlemen present, and the one I had gone particularly to see was not among them. We managed, however, to get up a quadrille, and with our partners had taken our positions, when suddenly two fearful shocks occurred, followed by such screaming and fainting, both in the ball-room and in the streets, as I never heard

before. The ladies were carried out, and of course the ball was at an end.

This earthquake did a great deal of damage in Basseterre, many houses having been thrown down and some lives lost. It was also severely felt at Brimstone Hill, where Charlie Murray was pitched out of bed on his head, and much hurt.

I had one more meeting with her I loved so dearly, and we swore eternal constancy, &c., &c., as youthful lovers ever do, but I never saw her again. I might have done so —mine the fault—and I suppose my readers will say, we don't care one farthing whether you did or not.

The vessel arrived one morning, and we were to embark the next day. While I was asleep in bed, I was knocked up by Dowman and Murray, who had been spending the evening at the Scotch doctor's. Murray, as usual, had imbibed too much, and at the last moment had proposed for Miss Forbes. Charlie was a very handsome fellow, an only son, and well off in the world, and consequently the young lady, highly gratified, accepted him, saying her papa would see him

in the morning before he embarked. Charlie said he would call himself and settle everything. Jack Dowman had heard and seen all that had taken place, and thinking that in the morning Murray might recollect nothing about it, had brought him to my room, and knocked me up to remonstrate with him. However, Charlie insisted that he would do nothing but marry his darling Eliza, and see her dear papa in the morning. Sick of his nonsense, I turned him out, and turned in myself. We were not to embark until after breakfast, and about six o'clock Dowman and myself knocked Charlie up, and told him it was time for him to go and ask Dr. Forbes for his daughter. He stared at us, and did not seem to understand a word about it, and ultimately declared that he had not the slightest recollection of anything that had taken place. As to proposing, he had never dreamed of such a thing, and could not possibly have done so. However, when Dowman informed him that he had heard the proposal and the conversation that accompanied it, he was in a pretty fright. How to get him on board without coming across the

family was now our object, a matter of some difficulty, as we could not get down the Hill without passing the doctor's house, and they were sure to be on the look-out. At last I hit upon a plan. The senior officers, being all married, would be looking after their families, and in all probability I should march the wing down the Hill. If such was the case, Charlie was to be dressed in his European servant's regimentals, fall into the ranks, and march on board thus disguised. As we had expected, S——y desired me to take command, and Charlie took his place in the ranks, a proceeding which the men did not understand, and there was many a grin and laugh, and well he did so, for, as we passed the house, the whole family were outside. I could not help laughing, when I saw the culprit turning away his face as he left his "beloved" of the night before. I was asked by the Doctor where Murray was, as he said he wished particularly to see him, and the lady appeared most anxious also. I said they would no doubt see or hear from him before he sailed, and I left them lamenting. Charlie escaped this time, but not long after,

trying the same game in Ireland, he was nabbed, and married before he well knew what he was about.

We arrived in Barbadoes, after a voyage in which nothing of moment occurred except a row between the captain of the transport and old "By Gad," the latter threatening to put the first mate in irons for not standing "at attention" before him, an act for which he was obliged to publicly apologise on arriving at Barbadoes. Although belonging to the same regiment, he was not asked to join our mess on board, his conduct with respect to Judge Pickwood had so disgusted us. He turned out a very different man from what he had been two years before; and after leaving us at Barbadoes, he went home, and sold out, and we heard of him no more. Another brevet-major was brought into the corps in his place, named Bunratti, if anything a greater original than his predecessor, and of whom I shall have more to say by-and-by.

At Barbadoes the general court-martial on Brutus Emilius had not yet assembled. The charges were connected with a quarrel

between a Captain Cookson, of the Artillery, and himself, in which Brutus made use of most improper language. It seems that Cookson was not at all a favourite in the Artillery, nor was he a very popular man with any of those who had the honour of his acquaintance. What I am now about to relate took place after our departure. While the Court was sitting and the proceedings going on, an anonymous letter was sent to Brutus, telling him that if he would meet the writer at a certain place at night he would give him some information relative to the character of the prosecutor, which would be of service to him on his court-martial. Brutus met his correspondent, and certainly received information of a damaging nature, if true. Further correspondence then took place; the *esprit de corps* of the Artillery was roused; they determined to find out the anonymous letter-writer, and ultimately a fighting Irishman of the corps, named Mahon,* a Doctor, called upon Brutus, and gave him his choice of delivering up the letters or meeting him next morning. Brutus, like a mean-spirited

* Mahon died in London about two years ago. He went by the name of Major Mahon in sporting circles.

coward, gave up the letters, which, however base the conduct of the writer might have been, had proved of use to him, and he ought to have been shot a dozen times before condescending to act as he did. The consequence was that the writer was proved to be an officer named Layard, of the Artillery. The charge was preferred against him, he was tried, and very properly cashiered. Brutus also was dismissed the service, but afterwards restored and transferred to a regiment in India. I once sold my horse in St. Kitts to save him from arrest, and gave him the proceeds. I never saw the money again; one thing, I never expected it.

The 93rd Highlanders were in Barbadoes at this time. Our colonel had arrived from England, bringing with him an Irish piper for the regiment, named O'Kelly, a little elderly man with one leg shorter than the other, an awful drunkard, but a most excellent musician, who could bring from his pipe notes which were deliciously sweet. Of course the colonel was asked to the mess of the Highlanders, and went, accompanied by his piper. After dinner four splendid-look-

ing fellows entered, dressed in the full Highland costume, and, according to custom, marched round the room, their pipes in full play, and making what I always thought—Scotchman though I am—a most hideous noise. Nothing would suit our colonel but that O'Kelly should follow their example, and perambulate the room, and so great a difference was there in the appearance of the gigantic Highland pipers and that of the little dot of an Irishman, that all were bursting with laughter. But when the giants were gone, what music little Paddy brought out of his instrument, and he was kept playing for hours, until the little man, from weariness and drink, could neither stand nor play the pipes, and was carried off in triumph on the shoulders of the Scotch officers, who fairly acknowledged the musical superiority of the Irish. I will grant in the field, when marching against an enemy, the Highland pipe may be considered a most encouraging and warlike instrument, which will make a man walk into a cannon's mouth, but it is very different in a mess-room or ball-room, where it is totally out of place.

CHAPTER X.

DEMERARA—BRITISH GUIANA—ATTACHED TO THE 25TH REGIMENT—REGIMENTAL PETS—FORGERY—AN IRISH AND A SCOTCH REGIMENT—MOSQUITOES—SANDFLIES—MARABUNTAS AND JIGGERS—SNAKES—THE COUNI-COUCHE, OR BUSH-MASTER—TREE SNAKE—FATAL ACCIDENT—AN IRISH GIANT—STRANGE SCENE IN A BILLIARD ROOM—DEATH OF THE IRISH GIANT.

AFTER three days' sail we entered the muddy waters that told us we were close on the coast of South America, and a few hours afterwards we cast anchor off Georgetown. I was disembarked in command of a company, and attached to do duty with the 25th Regiment, the remainder of my own corps going on to Berbice, with the exception of detachments to Fort D'Urban and Mahaica. I was very glad I was not accompanying them, as the reports about Fort Cange, Berbice, were anything but favourable.

A very nice body of officers were the 2nd, and a most gentlemanly person the colonel, but not the man to command a regiment, particularly one of the description of the 2nd. An Englishman born, he was one of the staunchest Scotchmen I ever met, so much so that, if possible, he would not have had an English or an Irishman in the corps. They were certainly, in point of appearance, the largest men, not even excepting the 87th and my own regiment, that I had ever met. They were nearly to a man Scotch, though the regiment was a south country corps. So handsome a set of lads as their Light Company were composed of, no other corps in the service, I am sure, could produce; they were all picked for their face and figure, and were the pets of the colonel. I recollect his appointing four of these lads in one day lance-corporals, giving them each a new kit and a silver watch (he was a man of large private means), but that very night, or the following, the men were absent, the kits and watches made away with. One of them, named Symonton, forged the colonel's name, and received fourteen more watches from the

shopkeeper. In fact the regiment was anything but in good order, and crime was very great. When you meet bad Scotchmen you meet the worst of the worst, but not only is this the case in the army, but everywhere else. In New South Wales, among the convicts, you meet an Irishman, he may be a good man, an Englishman a tolerable one, but in nine cases out of ten a Scotchman is a ruffian of the vilest description. It is also a great mistake to suppose the drinking part of the army are Irish. All three are, we know, partial to their liquor, but in my opinion and experience the Scotchman is the worst of the three.

Some years ago two regiments were stationed together at the Cape, the one composed of Irishmen, a national Irish regiment, the other about one of the most national Scotch regiments in the service. Now and then men of the former would come into barracks noisy and singing, as Irishmen in drink generally are and do, and consequently the regiment got the name of being a drunken, riotous set. On the other hand, the cannie Scots were considered patterns of sobriety;

but—and my informant was an officer at that time in the regiment—"If our men were paraded in line at tattoo, and you gave a good shove to the right-hand man of the Grenadiers, the whole regiment would go down like a pack of cards." So much for the difference of country. Pat drank, and was uproarious; Sandy drank, and went to bed like a lamb.

The few Scotchmen we ever had in my regiment were decidedly about the greatest drunkards in it; but it might be, as old Mac once said, "What can you expect them to be for enlisting in an Irish regiment?" But the thirst in the Scot is certainly excessive. Look to Aberdeen, Dundee, and Glasgow, and then turn to Dublin, where you will not see a drunken man in the streets if you walk them daily for a week.

The Scotch soldier, when a bad one, is also a most insubordinate fellow, and, being generally a better-educated man than his English and Irish comrades, is more of a lawyer. I recollect once being quartered with a Scotch regiment in India, and it was a general observation among the officers of

the garrison, "that they would sooner try six Irishmen by court-martial than one Scotchman, so much trouble would the individual Scot give them."

But for a non-commissioned officer or a drill-sergeant give me the Scotchman, the best I have ever seen are of that country, and the Guards used, in olden times, to send as sergeant-majors to line regiments many of them, and their splendid drill was soon evidenced in the wonderful improvement of the corps.

I was walking one forenoon across the parade ground at Demerara with a young officer of the 2—th, a very great person in his own estimation, and one who looked upon a common soldier as the dirt beneath his feet. His father kept a large distillery in the North of Ireland, but you would have imagined, from the airs this young fellow gave himself, that his governor owned the whole county. We met a soldier of the regiment staggering towards the barracks. Our friend might easily have avoided him, but instead of doing so he went towards him and in a most imperious manner said,

"You're drunk, go to the guardhouse."

The Scot stood still, and, looking with drunken gravity at his addressor, said,

"Gang to the guard-house, ye ———," making use of a most opprobrious expression, "yer faythe kept a whuskey shop in Belfast," he said, walked on, turned back, and continued, "ay, and by G—d selt the worst whuskey in the hail town."

He then proceeded on his way, leaving me in fits of laughter, and the other in a most frightful state of irritation. The contempt with which the man said "the worst whuskey in the hail town," was most ludicrous.

I was once upon a court-martial trying a soldier of a Highland regiment, for telling the officer inspecting his company that he, the officer, "had nae mair brains than a kail runt." For this infraction of military law he was sentenced to receive two hundred lashes, but the officer commanding the garrison, who was also colonel of the man's regiment, perhaps agreeing in opinion with him, remitted the punishment.

Demerara is the most awful place, Berbice

excepted, for sandflies and mosquitoes I ever came across; at certain seasons it is almost impossible to exist with them. I have sat down to mess, when I have been scarcely able to see my next door neighbour, in consequence of smoke, every person having under his chair a pot of wet straw which is set fire to. Most prefer eating their dinners even in the smoke that arises from the straw, to being bitten to death by these annoying insects.

I recollect my poor friend Cobbe, who died from wounds received at the Redan, landing with a detachment and sleeping in my room. When he appeared next morning his head was like a plum-pudding, and he was almost blind for several days. On me, for what reason I cannot tell, their bites had very little effect, but I have seen those whose skin was so tender that they have become seriously ill in consequence. The dykes and canals that intersect Georgetown tend to breed and nourish these pests, but for which Demerara would not be a disagreeable quarter.

There is another little insect, called the

"jigger," that settles in the toes. I had the pleasure of nourishing one of them for some time, and could not imagine what it was, until my black servant informed me, and extracted it. You feel a gentle, pleasing itching in your toe, which will continue for a long time without your knowing from what it proceeds, unless you have had a jigger attack before. When my jigger was extracted, a hole remained in my toe into which you could have put the tip of your little finger. If in taking the insect out its bag should break, a sore may ensue, that has often entailed a long and serious illness.

There is a large species of wasp, that forms its nest in corners of your barrack-room or the verandah outside. I had the pleasure once, also, of being stung behind the ear by the "marabunta," as it is called, and the pain was very severe for a couple of hours.

There are also plenty of scorpions and centipedes, but I do not think I ever saw a snake in or near the barracks, though the country abounds with them. Rattlesnakes are in great numbers, also a small but very poisonous snake, called the "Labarri,"

greatly resembling the "Cobra Manilla" of the East. There is also a small green snake, a very deadly one: it in general hides among the leaves of trees, from whence it has been known to dart, and bite people riding or walking beneath. We had a detachment at an outpost named Fort D'Urban, about twelve miles from George-town. On the estate of a Mr. Spencer, close to it, was a fine-looking, young Scotch overseer. Riding out one evening, a green snake bit him from a tree, and he died in three hours. But the most dreadful creature of the reptile tribe, that infest the forests and wilds of this part of South America, is the "couni couche," or bush-master.* This snake has the size and strength of the boa-constrictor, and the venom of the cobra-capella. The Buck Indians, when they fancy or dread that one of these brutes are in their vicinity, will raze their villages to the ground, and go for miles away. Luckily they are very scarce; I only saw one stuffed, that had been shot by a friend of mine—Mr. William Burnett, of George-town; it was a horrid-looking creature, and measured twenty-two feet in length.

* There is one of these brutes now in the British Museum, stuffed.

Alligators abounded in almost every creek and river, and I have seen men bathing in the Labarri Creek among them without the slightest fear. I confess I should not like to have done so myself.

There was only one officer's guard in George-town, and I am going to relate a circumstance that occurred one night while on that duty, and which might have proved a most serious affair.

In George-town, at the time I speak of, a young Irish medical man, named Dane, had lately arrived from the mother-country. He was, without exception, the largest, heaviest, and most powerful man for his age I ever met. Standing six feet three in height, he weighed the enormous weight of twenty stone, without seeming to have the slightest superfluous fat about him; his arms and legs were one mass of muscle; he had a fine, handsome, good-natured face, and, in fact, was a wonder to look at, being only twenty-two years of age. I invited him on the day in question to dine with me at the guard-room, and to meet him I asked three other friends—Dodgson and Burnett, civi-

lians, and O'Donnell, an officer of the regiment I was attached to. The two former, one English and the other Scotch, were upwards of six feet three in height, while O'Donnell, the Celt, exceeded six feet, and was noted for his bruising powers. I myself, although only five feet eight, was very active, and had the strength of a man of six feet, weighing twelve stone. I mention all this, as it has reference to what follows.

We all met at dinner, and while smoking our cigars the conversation turned upon running, O'Donnell saying he would run any man in Demerara one hundred yards. Our herculean friend, Dane, said he would run him fifty yards for a dozen of champagne. This was at once accepted by O'Donnell, who thought he had a good thing. As it was a beautiful moonlight night, it was agreed the race should be run at once.

Accordingly we went outside the guard-room, the ground was measured and the opponents started, when to our great surprise Dane won by about a yard. Unfortunately the lost champagne was sent for, and a good deal of it drunk, it evidently having more

effect upon Dane than on anyone else. We agreed to adjourn to a neighbouring billiard-room and send the remainder of the wine there, and, although I had no business to leave my guard, I very improperly went with them.

Dane and myself were playing a game at billiards, there being no one there except our party and the black marker, when he suddenly became excited, and began to abuse the King, country, and government. O'Donnell, who seemed to feel a little hurt at being beaten in the race, called me aside and said, that, being senior officer, I ought to take notice of the language made use of by Dane. I accordingly did so, but it only made him worse, and he threatened to throw me out of the window, and advanced towards me as if for the purpose of doing so. O'Donnell started up and confronted him, when one blow from the infuriated giant's fist sent him stunned into a corner with his jawbone broken; the two others—Dodgson and Burnett—attempting to interfere, were both sent reeling and almost senseless into other corners, and I was left to the mercy of the

madman, for such he certainly was. Round and round the billiard table he pursued me, at every turning the thick end of my billiard cue resounded on his head with all my strength, when he would shake his head like a bull and go on; luckily he did not get hold of a cue himself, or my days were ended. Round and round again we went, each time I turned a corner whack came the heavy stick, for I now knew that nothing but my own exertions could save my life, as my three friends were all lying stupefied in corners. My great activity stood me in good stead, and it was not until Dane had received upwards of twenty blows (and everyone knows how hard the butt of a billiard cue is) upon his head, that he fell down like a huge ox, insensible. How I did not kill him by striking him such a blow on the temple, is a marvel to me. Meantime the black marker had been howling murder in a corner of the room, and him I despatched for a doctor, as O'Donnell was moaning in great pain, and I was also afraid for Dane's life. I, however, took the precaution of standing over him, in case he should return to life and renew the

attack. This, however, he did not until the arrival of the doctor. O'Donnell's jaw was found to be badly broken, but it was repaired as well as possible, and he was sent off to barracks. Dodgson and Burnett were more stunned than severely hurt, although the latter bled a great deal, and his face was swollen like a bladder. The room round the billiard table was absolutely flowing with blood from the head and face of my late antagonist, and it was some time before the doctor and his assistant could bring him round. His first attempt, on returning to sensibility, was to try to kick the doctor, but fortunately he almost immediately fainted. His head, as might be supposed, was in a frightful state, and as the doctor said it was necessary that he should be at once taken home, a carriage was sent for and he was removed, I returning immediately to my guard.

Early next morning I went to Dane's lodgings, for I was afraid of the result. On knocking at the door I was delighted to hear his voice, calling me to come in, but such a figure as he was I never before saw.

His hair was all shaved, and his head one patch of plaster. He did not seem to be very much the worse physically, but his was an Irish skull, and there never could have been one like it before. He said he was only sorry he had not received worse treatment, as no doubt he deserved it, for he was a perfect madman when drunk, and that it was God's mercy he had not killed some of us. He appeared to be much more sorry about O'Donnell than himself. O'Donnell was laid up for nearly a month, but our friend was out in ten days.

He was of a good Irish family. At an election dinner in his county, Fermanagh, he had drunk hard, and, having become almost mad, had cleared the room of upwards of twenty men, throwing two over the banisters, and breaking their legs. For this escapade he was obliged to fly, and his friends, to get rid of him, sent him out to South America, to carry on his profession, as he had been educated as a medical student. I met several of his relations years afterwards, and it was from some of them I learned this episode in his career. Alas,

his giant frame, his colossal chest and muscular limbs, could not save him from a South American fever, and six months after the occurrence above mentioned, poor Dane was food for the worms of Demerara.

CHAPTER XI.

MY FIRST DUEL—CURIOUS SCENE AT IT—LIEUTENANT G——N —DR. GIBSON—AMUSING ANECDOTES OF BARON DECKNER—CURIOUS GENERAL COURT-MARTIAL—PRIVATE MCNAMEE AND HIS WIFE—PAYMASTER D——. —AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A BEGGAR BOY—OLD MAJOR BUNRATTI—CURIOUS CHARACTER—COMICAL SCENES—THE SOLDIER IN THE POND—THE MAJOR'S TRIAL BY GENERAL COURT-MARTIAL.

AN order for the assembly of a General Court-Martial having been issued for some time, detachments of officers were sent from the different West Indian islands to sit as members. Among the rest was a Lieutenant G——n of the 67th regiment, whom—having a cousin in the same corps, and wishing on his account to do the civil—I asked to come and live with me, as I had two rooms. This officer, a fine tall handsome looking fellow, very gladly accepted

my invitation, and for the first day or two I thought him a very pleasant companion.

Smoking our cigars and drinking our brandy and water one evening in the most social way, the name of an officer in garrison happened to be brought on the *tapis*. G——n not appearing to have the same ideas respecting him as I had, and expressing himself rather warmly, I said, "Oh! don't let us quarrel about a puppy like that." He walked out almost immediately, and I went to bed. About daylight in the morning a knock came to my door, and, when it was opened, to my astonishment, a cousin of the puppy, an officer of his regiment, walked in. "Hollo!" said I, "Peter, what brings you here?"

"I am sorry to say," was the reply, "that I am the bearer of a hostile message from my cousin, G——n having been to him last night, and told him you had been abusing him in the most unwarrantable manner."

I was certainly thunderstruck that a man accepting my hospitality could thus violate the sanctity of a private conversation. I, therefore, told all the circumstances to Peter

B——, and concluded by saying, "If your cousin, therefore, chooses to call me out for saying he was a puppy, I cannot help it, I am sorry for having done so, and can do no more."

Peter said, "On the part of his cousin, he was perfectly satisfied."

"And now," said I, "what do you think of G——n's conduct?"

"I think him an infernal blackguard," was his answer.

I went, at once, off to my friend Dodgson, who immediately waited upon G——n, and it was arranged that a meeting should take place next morning at dawn of day. The doctor who attended us, is now the highest military medical officer in the army, Gibson.* We found G——n and his friend, the puppy, on the field. My friend, having won the toss, was in the act of measuring the ground; but had scarcely taken three steps, when G——n, in the most bullying manner, called out, "That the distance was enough, it was only the other day that I fired three shots at Elton before we left Gibraltar." No notice being taken of his bullying re-

* This was written before the retirement and death of Gibson.

mark, he continued to talk about the people he had fought with, until we took our ground and fired. I believe my ball scratched his brace button.

My friend then went up, and said I was satisfied. "But, by G—d!" exclaimed G——n, "I am not, nor will I be until the evening."

Finding I had met so bloodthirsty an opponent, I also lost my temper, and asked for another shot, assuring him he should have as many as he required. A stop was, however, put to this unseemly scene, by G——n's second, who, stepping forward, said, "Mr. G——n, your conduct has been so extraordinary that I refuse to act for you, and shall leave the ground," and turning to Dodgson, he continued, "You had better take your friend away, he has behaved like a gentleman."

On our return to barracks, we were placed in arrest, and ordered to send in a statement of what had occurred, to the Governor, Sir Carmichael Smith. I sent in a simple recital of the affair, and was released from arrest next day, nor did I even get a repri-

mand. G——n was kept in arrest until the vessel arrived to take him away, when he also was released.

This young man, I was afterwards informed, had already fought six or seven duels. On going to Barbadoes some ten months after, on leave of absence, I was asked to stay with an old friend of my father's, the late witty and jovial George Harper, of G——n's Regiment. One morning at breakfast old George came in bursting with rage. "I wish to G—d, youngster," he said, "that you had shot that infernal fellow, G——n. I have just had a letter from St. Kitts, and he has wounded poor Paddy Byrne, my best friend, through the thigh and lamed him for life." And a very narrow escape G——n had himself. G——n, as I have already said, was a tall man, while Paddy Byrne was one of the shortest in the service, and he took off G——n's forage cap, with his ball through the peak. A pretty narrow squeak. I asked Harper how they allowed such a man to remain in the regiment, and he replied that they had a custom that if a man was called out, he must go. The

number of duels at this time, and for some time before we arrived in the West Indies, would indeed make a man of the present day open his eyes.

Strange to say, some time afterwards G——n, who, it seemed, lived but to fight, was obliged to leave the regiment for not going out. Going home from the West Indies, on leave of absence, in a merchant vessel, he, of course, picked up a quarrel with the captain, who called him out. G——n said he was not his equal, and would not fight him. The captain happened to be a master in the navy, and reported the circumstances to the officers, who, no doubt glad of an opportunity, refused to receive G——n, and he sold out. I afterwards heard that he died in a madhouse. I discovered subsequently that there was madness in the family, for, being in Jersey some two or three years after, I one day met two very lovely girls, and, wishing to know who they were, I followed them home, and, strange to say, found they were the sisters of G——n. Their mother was said to be quite deranged, and dressed in a red coat used to beat a drum in the streets of St.

Heliers. I afterwards heard that one of these beautiful girls died in a French madhouse.

There was a German named Deckner, a very curious person, stationed at this time in George-town, in command of a company of a West India Regiment. He was an old man, upwards of sixty, but a very jolly fellow, and a rare companion, and had, I believe, been tried by general court-martial during his service five or six times. I have often heard him say, "General court-martial! I don't care von damn for sgeneral court-martial. By Got, Sir! I have been tried by six sgeneral court-martial." He was attached to the Commissariat department, during the war, at Jamaica, and amassed a great deal of money. On going home to Europe he refused to take mercantile bills, but changed all his money into doubloons, which he took on board with him; but, alas for poor Deckner, the ship went down, and, although he saved his life, he lost all he was worth, his doubloons going to the bottom. And now, past sixty, he was only a captain in a West India regiment.

One of his trials by court-martial would make a very good story, and he used to tell

it with great relish. It appears he was acting brigade-major at Jamaica, when an outbreak of the negroes took place in some distant part of the island, and he received an order from the General in command to seize upon all horses, vehicles, &c., for the conveyance of troops. Old Deck, it seems, was on very bad terms with the gentry residing in the part of the island where he was quartered, and on receiving the above order he thought he had a good opportunity of paying them off.

There was a regular promenade and drive, which every evening was full of the *élite* of the place, and where all the carriages, &c., of the gentry assembled, that their occupants might listen to the band of the regiment or regiments. Taking this opportunity, old Deck, with his myrmidons, made his swoop upon the fashionable carriages and horses, and, notwithstanding the screams of the ladies and remonstrances of the men, took possession of every vehicle, and sent them under escort to the place where the soldiers were assembled. These men quickly occupied

them, and proceeded in these luxurious vehicles back to the scene of the outbreak.

The Governor who had sent the order to Deckner had been daily expecting to be relieved by another, General Murray, if I recollect aright. That very night he arrived, and the late one took his departure next day. Of course there was a tremendous row at what the German had done, and, numerous complaints having been made to the new Governor, an explanation of his conduct was demanded, but the only reply they could get was that "he had done his duty."

Deckner was placed in arrest, and, grave charges being preferred against him, he was tried by a general court-martial. Witness after witness was examined, ladies who had fainted when deprived of their carriages were brought forward, and everything seemed to go against the unfortunate German, who never cross-examined the witnesses, or seemed to care one pin about the matter. The Court having dragged on its weary length for more than a fortnight, Deckner was at length asked for his defence.

"By Got, Sir, there is my defence," he

said to the President, handing in a small piece of paper to him.

The President, looking at the paper, found it was the original order from the Governor to seize upon every animal and vehicle he could for the public service, without reservation of any kind.

"Why, good heavens, Sir!" said the astonished President, "if you had sent this in to the authorities, there would have been no occasion for this court-martial, with all its trouble and expense. Why did you not do so?"

"No, by Got!" said the prisoner. "You did vish to thry me by court-martial. I not care von damn for court-martial. Now what you tink of dis court-martial? Ha, ha!"

Deckner could imbibe an immense deal of grog, but his great liking was for rum-and-water, and he said everyone was a milksop who could not put at least one bottle per diem under his belt. I recollect once that, on a district court-martial at which a soldier was tried, old Deck was very disgusted at the prisoner's defence. The man stated that he had only drunk two glasses of rum, which

had taken effect upon him, and under its influence he had committed the crime of which he was accused. When the sentence was put round, and the punishment was to be recorded, old Deck was asked what he would do. "Sentence him? by Got, Sir, I will sentence him to seven years in h—ll. The tam scoundrel, get drunk on two glasses of rum, he be tamned."

Poor old Deck, he died very soon after I left Demerara, and was buried with military honours.

A very extraordinary court-martial now took place. In the regiment I was attached to, there was a soldier named McNamee, a very handsome, in fact magnificent looking fellow, from Aberdeen. His manly face and form had attracted the notice of a very beautiful girl, the daughter of a Scotch clergyman, in that county, and she eventually left her father's house and married the handsome soldier. The paymaster of the regiment had for some time, at George-town, taken Mrs. McNamee as servant to his wife, a position she was glad to take, for in those days a soldier's wife was

in a wretched condition and glad to take any service.

The said paymaster of the regiment had not the most irreproachable character, particularly among women, and whether he did make any advances towards Mrs. McNamee or not I am in no position to say; but one evening, when talking to her in his house, the husband suddenly made his appearance, and, without saying a word, struck him a violent blow on the head with the butt end of a pistol, and nearly fractured his skull. McNamee was at once seized, and the officer, on his recovery, was obliged by the military authorities—I do not think at his own wish—to prefer the accusation against his assailant, and accordingly a charge of so serious a nature as to endanger McNamee's life was preferred against him, and he was tried by a general court-martial.

On the assembling of the Court, the President read a letter from the commander-in-chief in Barbadoes, in which we were directed, in the event of our finding that the prisoner had received sufficient provocation to justify the assault, to acquit him. The Court sat

for upwards of a month, and each day the prosecutor provided us with an excellent lunch at his own expense. In the course of the trial evidence of the most conflicting nature was brought forward; and one morning, the Court being assembled, the Paymaster in his duty of prosecutor, informed us, "that he was extremely sorry to say the prisoner was so drunk he could not appear before the Court." Incredible as this may appear it was actually the case. A bottle of rum had been conveyed to McNamee in the guard-house, the contents of which he had partly drunk. There were several surmises as to how the bottle got there, and through whose means it was sent, as of course such an incident was rather damaging to the prisoner On the termination of the proceedings the sentence was "Guilty. Seven years transportation." The Court, however, was again assembled to revise its proceedings, and, on reconsideration of the case, the sentence was "Acquitted. Justifiable provocation." This verdict, of course, was tantamount to accusing the Paymaster of perjury, and he was accordingly tried on

that charge, found guilty, and sentenced to be cashiered, but pardoned.

Many people were of opinion that the charge against the officer was a plant to obtain money, yet, if such was the case, it was scarcely the way to get it by fracturing the paymaster's skull. I, however, had my own opinion, and good and sufficient reason for it. McNamee and his wife were, I believe, sent home. Some years since, I read a book called, if I remember right, "The Autobiography of a Beggar Boy," written by a brother of this man's, in which the above curious court-martial is mentioned. The last I heard of the old paymaster was after the return of the regiment from the West, when he got into a row at Fermoy, and had his skull again nearly fractured, by a man well-known in those days, called "Castor Jackson."

One morning I was informed that two or three of my men had been confined and ill-treated by a lance-corporal of the regiment we were attached to, named Clarke. This man was a perfect young giant in appearance, standing at least six feet four, remark-

ably handsome, and a very great pet of the Colonel's. Half drunk, he had pitched into three of my smallest men, without the slightest provocation, and had absolutely carried one under each arm to the guard-house, and tossed them into the black hole, one on top of the other, at the same time using most abusive language relative to their being Irishmen, he being a Scotchman himself. Finding my men had been so badly treated, I went to the Colonel for redress; but he seemed so amused at the prowess shown by his pet, that all I could get was the release of the men, and an admonition to the corporal to be more careful in future.

The Colonel having gone home on leave, before many months had passed I saw Clarke receive three hundred lashes, and eventually he was turned out of the regiment. Four or five years afterwards, when stationed in Manchester, a very fine-looking man, most respectably dressed, came up to me, and touching his hat, said in broad Scotch,

"I hope ye're well, Sir?"

I looked at him, and recognised Clarke. I said,

"Good heavens, what brought you here?"

"Why, Sir," he replied, "after I left the regiment, the Colonel got me a situation on the railway as clerk, and I have been here ever since."

He certainly put his leaving the regiment in a very favourable light, for I knew he had been drummed out of it. But there was this scamp holding a responsible situation, which he had occupied for years. The Colonel, at any rate, had not forgotten his pet.

About this time Brevet-Major Bunratti joined from England, and assumed command of my detachment. A more comical character than Bunratti I never met. An Irishman from the County Cork, he was a little red-faced man, with a most quizzical expression of countenance, and had the broadest of brogues. He had served with the Connaught Rangers in General Whitelock's expedition, had been taken prisoner, and severely wounded in the head, a misfortune which had such an effect on him, when in liquor, that he was almost a madman. And drink he did, morning, noon, and night—in fact, I could hardly say he was ever sober.

The day he arrived he inspected the detachment, and had already evidently been at the bottle, for he seemed to know as much about a soldier and his accoutrements as he did of the philosopher's stone. He inspected the company in a calico dressing-gown and a straw hat. He would take a musket, look down the muzzle, cocking his eye like a drunken magpie, as if he expected to find it full of something valuable, and put such absurd questions, that he had both myself and the detachment in roars of laughter. He at last came opposite a very queer old fellow, named Gourley, whose appearance and age seemed to strike him.

"Hallo, my old cock," said he, "how many years do ye carry?"

"Fifty-one," replied Gourley. "Only a little bit of a boy yet."

"Ay," said Bunratti. "Fifty-one! Be me shoul, me boy, many a canal of rum ye've dhrunk in that time."

"I wish I had," said Gourley. "But from all I hear, yerself would drink a river to my canal."

Bunratti looked at him and walked on.

Gourley was a North of Ireland man, had been at Waterloo in the Artillery, and was a drunken, insolent old soldier, whom I had seen flogged several times, and who took his punishment, even up to his old age, with the utmost indifference, not even putting his shirt in his mouth. He asserted that in his service he had received thirty-six hundred lashes. The inspection was one of the most ludicrous affairs, and I was very glad when it was over.

Old Bunratti commenced his pranks that very night. Our detachment was stationed by itself in Kingstown barracks, some half a mile from Eve Leary, at the entrance of George-town. Coming home about eleven o'clock on the night in question, I saw the barracks lighted up, and could not imagine what could be the reason, as all lights should be out at nine o'clock. Entering the yard, I perceived a group of men in their shirt sleeves, and some even without their trousers, and old Bunratti, similarly attired, haranguing them from the balcony of the verandah. A man named Kerrin Cotton was in the group, tied hand and feet. When I came

up, Bunratti said, "Ye are just in time to see me bring a traitor to condign punishment; take him to the pond, and throw him in." From the thickness of his utterance, I perceived he was drunk, or very nearly so. In the middle of the yard was a large pond, some six feet deep. Kerrin Cotton, who was evidently drunk also, was taken to the water, and, when close on the brink, made a struggle, slipped, fell in and of course, bound as he was, went at once to the bottom. I jumped in, and with the assistance of several men lugged him out, or he would most certainly have been drowned. There happened to be a large ditch between the pond and the barracks, and Bunratti, in coming to see his orders executed, fell into it, and there he stuck, halloaing for assistance to pull him out, but I told the men not to mind his cries, but leave him there for the present. Meantime I had Cotton released from the ropes, and sent him a prisoner to the guard-room. I had now time to inquire into the affair. It appeared that Bunratti had insisted upon inspecting every man brought into barracks after tattoo, and had also given the men in

barracks some twenty dollars to treat themselves, and the consequence was a great deal of drunkenness. Kerrin Cotton, who went by the name of the Tinker in the regiment, having come across the Major, they had some words, and he ordered him to be tied and thrown into the pond as related.

All this time our friend was fast in the ditch, and anyone that has been in Demerara will know what the mud of a ditch in that part of the world is. Pretending only to discover him for the first time, we released him, with the loss of his slippers, which were left somewhere in the mud. He retired to his room, and then another scene occurred. Sending for the colour-sergeant, Scanlan, he said,

"Ye've a brother a priest in Mallow, haven't ye?"

"Yes, Sir," replied Scanlan.

"And a damned fine rascal he is," replied the Major.

"I am not aware, Sir, that my brother is anything of the kind," replied the sergeant.

"Mutiny, by the holy piper!" shouted the

Major, running to the verandah, bellowing, "Sergeant of the guard!"

The guard-house being within twenty yards of our quarters, the sergeant soon made his appearance, and was at once ordered to take Scanlan and put him in the stocks, with which all guard-houses in those days were provided.

It was no use my interfering, so Scanlan was taken off, but I managed to tell the sergeant to release him in a very short time. Scanlan had scarcely been conveyed away, before the door was thrown open and Mrs. Scanlan entered, roaring and crying, as only an Irishwoman can roar and cry, and calling for her darling husband, who was disgraced by being put into the stocks. Old Bunratti again rushed to the verandah, and called once more for the sergeant of the guard. On the appearance of that individual, he was ordered to take Mrs. Scanlan and put her in the stocks beside her husband. The men began to murmur, but, on my telling them to leave it to me, they went away quietly. I soon managed to get Bunratti off to bed, and lost no time in releasing the

sergeant and his wife, determined to have a pretty pill for the old Major in the morning.

I sent for Scanlan, and he wrote at my dictation a very long complaint against Bunratti, recapitulating everything that had taken place, he and his wife being placed in the stocks, &c. I thought it much better to take this step, and if possible give him a good fright, so as to prevent a recurrence of the events of the night before. Accordingly at breakfast a large official was brought in and delivered to Bunratti, containing Scanlan's official complaint, requesting it might at once be forwarded to the officer commanding the troops in British Guiana.

I never saw surprise and terror depicted more vividly on any man's face than they were in Bunratti's rose-coloured countenance.

"Holy Moses!" he exclaimed. "Shure I didn't do all this?"

"Upon my soul, Major, you did," I replied, "and much more, for you nearly drowned Kerrin Cotton the tinker, which if you had done, you would have been hanged as sure as mutton."

He had not the slightest recollection of what had taken place, and readily consented to send for Scanlan and his wife, to whom a most humble apology was made. Mrs. Scanlan was requested to accept fifty dollars, which she did with so good a grace that I almost expected her to say, "When will yere honor plaize to put Dan and myshelf in the stocks agin?" Kerrin Cotton was also paid for his ducking, and was in consequence drunk for a whole week.

Generous to a degree, poor old Bunratti became a great favourite with the men, but certainly did not maintain much discipline in the detachment. I was obliged to watch him very closely almost every night, or there would have been a repetition of the first night's proceedings, but gradually I could so manage him that I had very little trouble in keeping him quiet. When I left him he was tried by a general court-martial for being drunk on duty, but was acquitted after a great deal of contrary swearing; and I verily believe the authorities managed to try him for being drunk on the only night of the

three hundred and sixty-five that he was sober.

He was afterwards sent out on detachment to Fort D'Urban, where he commenced his pranks again. A letter came to me from Sergeant Scanlan, begging me for God's sake to come out and see them, as things could not go on much longer as they were doing. Getting three days leave, I instantly started for Fort D'Urban, for I was really very fond of poor old Bunratti. On arriving there, Scanlan informed me that every night for the last ten, at different hours, the men were turned out by beat of drum to man the Fort, as if they expected an attack from the slaves, and that the patience of the soldiers was beginning to tire, and some report or other would be made to head-quarters.

Bunratti was very glad to see me, and, after a pleasant evening with one or two visitors, retired to bed about twelve o'clock. I had scarcely got into my first sleep, when I was awoke by the drum beating to arms, and the voice of old Bun, shouting from the verandah, "Up, min, the inemy is upon us! up, every mother's son of ye! Drummer,

ye bastard of the world, bate the drum, or we'll be murthered, every man of us!" I got up, dressed myself, and by this time the men were turning out one by one, and certainly with a want of alacrity that, if there really had been an enemy, would have had us all massacred; turn out, however, they did with many an oath. Meanwhile the drum was beating, Burnatti cursing, swearing, and giving orders in his shirt from the verandah, while the men marched off to different stations on the Fort. After some time I reported to him that the enemy had been beaten off, and induced the unfortunate man to go to his bed.

Next day, consulting with Scanlan, we agreed to have no drum beating at any rate, and smashed both the drum-heads. Notwithstanding this, however, about one o'clock in the morning, he was holding on by the verandah as usual, and shouting for the men to turn out. As I had directed, no notice was taken of his clamour, and eventually finding they would not turn out, he retired to his apartments. Next day he gave the men a regular blow-out of brandy, rum, and a

couple of sheep, and highly praised them for the manner in which they had beaten off the enemy the night before.

He died of "delirium tremens" within the month, Sergeant Scanlan soothing his last moments. He was deeply regretted by the men, on whom in his madness, as I may call it, he expended every farthing he possessed.

CHAPTER XII.

VISIT TO JACK D——N AT MAHAICA—FORT D'URBAN—MOSQUITOES—TWO VERY CURIOUS GENERAL COURTS-MARTIAL—STEPHEN GORDON, THE GENTLEMAN—HIS EXPOSURE OF A COURT—PRIVATE GOODWIN—SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES OF A WINK—AN ALIBI—PRIVATE THEATRICALS—MILITARY PERFORMERS—CAUTY AND BRYAN MAGUIRE.

I NOW went on a visit to Jack D——n, who was on detachment at a place called Mahaica, about fifteen miles beyond Fort D'Urban, on the coast. Of all the horrid places I ever came across this beat them, and as for mosquitoes, bad as they were in George-town, they were fifty times worse here; albeit I never used to care much about their bites, at Mahaica they made me dance and swear not a little.

The room I slept in was over the regimental guard, and so bad were they the night I arrived, that in the middle of the

night I got up and struck a light, seized my powder-horn, and laid a train; the only way to get rid of them being to raise a smoke.

While making my preparations, I heard the men on guard talking to each other.

"The mosquitoes are mighty bad to-night," said one man.

"Bad," replied another. "Be J——s, there, one just bit me through the breast-plate."

Now considering that the soldier had his greatcoat on, that his belts were over it, and that his breastplate was nearly a quarter of an inch thick, it must have been a whopper. However, his assertion tickled my fancy so much that, incautiously stooping over the powder train, I set fire to it, and in consequence lost the hair off both my eyebrows, and burnt my face; it was months before they grew again, and I had good reason to remember that "giant mosquito." I had had quite enough of Mahaica, so returned to George-town, and thank heaven! never saw it again.

My father was now in command of the regiment, and one morning at breakfast he

said, "I see there is a great controversy going on in the papers, and that the principal writer against the Governor is a Mr. Warr; it would be strange if he should turn out to be your mother's first cousin, who has been lost for more than twenty-five years. I vote we go and call on him; it may be the lost one."

About a quarter of a century before, my mother's cousin, a young man of two or three and twenty, and son of the Dean of Bath and Wells, had gone to the West Indies with his regiment, but had suddenly sold out, and from that day to the time I am speaking of, nothing had been heard of him, nor had he written to one of his family. Barbadoes, however, was understood to have been the last place he had been at.

My father and self started one morning, and found out Mr. Warr's residence in the country. On sending up our names, we were asked to walk in, and found a handsome gentlemanly-looking man, who, however, did not appear to have any knowledge of us. My governor looked at him and said, "We must apologise for calling upon you as utter

strangers. I merely wish to ask if you ever knew Maria B——, for I am her husband, and this strapping fellow is her son."

"My G—d!" exclaimed Mr. Warr. "My dear little cousin Maria; I shall never forget her."

And I thought he would have pulled our arms out of the shoulders, such was his delight. He was, indeed, the lost sheep. Having formed a connection with a very pretty coloured girl, he had determined to sell out, forget his friends at home, and in South America turn planter, and make his fortune. He did so, and at the time I speak of had realised a handsome sum. Nothing could exceed his kindness while we remained in Guiana, and when I left for England, innumerable were the presents I took home to his little cousin Maria. He subsequently returned to England, lived in good style, and died in London some years ago.

I was rather amused one day on a regimental court-martial, at which a poor fellow, named Patrick Love, was tried for being absent all night. On being asked what he had to say in his defence, he said, "Ah, gentle-

men, what's the use of troubling yourselves? Put me down three hundred lashes; I wouldn't wish to take up yer time." Poor Love was sentenced to two hundred, but he did not receive a lash, for my poor old governor was in command, and as Patrick had never been flogged, he got off this time also.

Courts-martial in those days were very different indeed from what they are at present. At that time you had no book to guide you, no certain forms, except the oath and the "Articles of War." I have written ten courts-martial in one day, now it would be a difficult matter to get through more than two or three, and even then the orderly-room clerks would have had to write parts of them. I do not agree with many that a court-martial is the safest and most honourable Court to be tried by. I have seen some very strange courts-martial, and will give an account of one, which I dare say will yet be remembered by those who served in the West Indies at the time.

A staff-surgeon stationed at Tobago, and who was very much disliked by all that knew him, was tried by a general court-

martial on a charge of perjury. Officers from the different islands were sent to Tobago to form the Court. The 'Duke of York'. transport called at St. Kitts on the way down, and several of the members dined at our mess. The conversation generally turned upon the unfortunate medico, and dire was the vengeance sworn against him. Of course everyone imagined that these expressions of hatred were merely a figure of speech, and that when the evidence was heard justice would be done.

The perjury consisted in an oath taken by the prisoner that he was entitled to half-a-crown. Nothing could be clearer than the evidence in his favour, nothing more exculpatory than his defence. Yet, notwithstanding this, he was found "guilty," and sentenced to be cashiered.

In those days general courts-martial were sent to England for "approval and confirmation;" and in due time a tremendous letter came out from the authorities at home, saying that in the Judge Advocate-General's opinion, the prisoner had been found guilty "in direct contradiction to the evidence

brought before the Court," directing Dr. S—— to be immediately released from arrest and return to his duty, and sending out such a wigging to the President and members as I suppose no Court ever received. Here it was evident that bad feeling and dislike overweighed justice, and caused a "disgraceful verdict" to be given, when there was not the slightest foundation for it. I could mention other similar cases even up to the present time.

I happened to be on a couple of rather curious courts-martial about this period. Stephen Gordon belonging to the regiment I had been attached to was arraigned upon the following charge.

"For being drunk and using most insolent and insubordinate language to Brevet-Major Bunratti, of the — Regiment, at Fort D'Urban, on such a date, in calling him a drunken old ———."

This man, born a gentleman, had at one time been in possession of property near Edinburgh, worth nearly one thousand a year, all of which he had dissipated away,

and had then enlisted as a private soldier.

He had gone on pass to Fort D'Urban to see some friend in our regiment, had fallen in with poor Bunratti, and without provocation, had made use of the insubordinate language complained of.

In those days, Courts were not carried on with the propriety and decency, I may call it, that they are in the present day. I have seen officers during the whole almost of the proceedings reading a novel, others engrossed in the newspaper, others drawing caricatures and handing them from one to another; all this time evidence being given that might endanger the life of a fellow-creature, or at least consign him to long imprisonment or transportation.

I will say I was not one of these, I was too fond of the poor soldier to throw away any chance there might be of benefiting him. It was and is the duty of the President to prevent any proceeding of the kind, but it was very seldom he did so, and if officers themselves will only think of the solemn oath they take, viz., "That they will truly

try and determine according to the evidence brought before them, so help them God," they must see how little in accordance with such oath are the levity and carelessness shewn by such conduct. I was not therefore sorry when the circumstances I am about to mention took place. Probably, if an illiterate man had been before us, no remarks of the kind would have been made in his defence, but now we had a man who had received the education, and had mixed in the society of gentlemen, and whose intellectual face and head proved that, if he had lived a different life, he might have been an acquisition to any profession. He was tall, good-looking, and about twenty-eight years of age, with a most insolent, insubordinate expression. He was altogether what I should call a remarkably clever-looking man.

The evidence for the prosecution having closed, the prisoner was asked what he had to say in his defence.

"What is the use," replied Gordon, "of my saying anything in my defence? Why, half the officers do not know what has been going on for the last hour. Captain H——

has been wrapped up in that book he has now got hid under the table, Lieutenant S—— has been busily engaged with the newspapers ever since the Court sat, and Captain F—— of the Artillery has drawn as many caricatures as would fill a scrap-book. Defence, what the devil is the use of saying anything in my defence? But if you will have something, why, I did call Major Bunratti a drunken old ——, and it's quite true, and every man in his regiment knows it, and" (in a tone of the greatest contempt) "perhaps you had better put all this down in the proceedings of the Court."

Had a bomb-shell fallen on the middle of the table I do not think the President and members could have been more astonished.

The President rebuked Gordon, who only answered with a sneering smile. When the prisoner withdrew, the President opened out on the members; but it was too late, the mischief was done. The evidence to character given by the Adjutant was bad as bad could be, in every respect, and he was sentenced to fourteen years transportation.

I need not say the President did not

enter the whole of the prisoner's defence on the pages of the court-martial.

The other court-martial was also a general one.

The married men of different corps were quartered together in detached barracks, under an Ensign Thompson of the 2— regiment.

A man named Goodwin, of my corps, had been in confinement for a long time for having threatened to shoot Ensign Thompson. The court-martial had been put off for some months, I think in consequence of Goodwin going into hospital.

It appears that Ensign Thompson, entering the barracks one day, passed Goodwin, who was on sentry; on doing so Goodwin said, "If I hang for it, I'll shoot that fellow Thompson." He was immediately confined; a few days before Thompson had ordered Goodwin some extra drill.

Ensign Thompson was examined, and swore to the above. Lieutenant S——, who was with him passing into the barracks, gave evidence to the same effect, viz.:

That he heard Goodwin say, "If I hang for it, I'll shoot that fellow Thompson."

This was the evidence against the prisoner.

Goodwin, being placed on his defence, acknowledged making use of the expressions sworn to by the above officers, but stated that they had reference to Private Peter Thompson of the 2— regiment, with whom he had had a quarrel that day, and called upon Private Peter Thompson, who being duly sworn, said,

That on the day in question he passed Goodwin on sentry, and they had some words, and Goodwin swore he would be revenged upon him.

Question. Did Goodwin after this show you any ill feeling?

Answer. Yes, he challenged me to fight next day.

The witness withdrew.

Private John Henry, 2— regiment, called by the prisoner and examined by him.

Question. Were you on guard with me on such and such a date over the barrack gate?

Answer. I was.

Question. Did you hear me say, "if I

hang for it, I'll shoot that fellow Thompson.

Answer. I did.

Question. To whom did I refer in that expression?

Answer. To Private Peter Thompson of my corps.

It now appeared evident to all that Ensign Thompson had made a mistake, and that the person Goodwin threatened to shoot was the private, and not the officer. I must confess I was somewhat of that opinion myself. The President desired the last evidence to retire, and in doing so I happened to look at the prisoner, and saw him give what I considered a triumphant wink to the evidence. That wink entailed seven years transportation upon Goodwin. With every kind feeling towards the soldier, I was yet one of those who thought duty was duty, and I had no hesitation in punishing a bad soldier if he deserved it, nor would I willingly let a ruffian escape if I could help it.

I asked the President to clear the Court. The moment the Court was cleared, I asked the President if he would be good enough

to call the adjutant of the 2— regiment. He replied, "What is the use, the case is perfectly clear;" the Judge-Advocate also said the same.

As I persisted in my wish to have the Adjutant called, it was done; and when he appeared, I sent through the President the following question.

"Can you produce the guard reports of such and such a date, with the names of the men of your regiment on that guard?"

"I can."

"Then produce them."

The Adjutant returned in about a quarter of an hour with the guard reports.

The name of John Henry was not among them. I put the following question. "John Henry has sworn he was on guard with Goodwin that day; can you state whether he was on any other duty, or how was he employed on the day specified?"

The Adjutant retired, and after a short time returned, and to the astonishment of the Court, and, no doubt, the great chagrin of Goodwin, reported, "That, on the day in question, John Henry was in Barbadoes

working as a tradesman, and that Private Peter Thompson was also there, and that neither of them arrived in Demerara for nearly a month after Goodwin had been confined for the crime alleged against him. As I said before, the wink got Goodwin a conviction and seven years' transportation, and his friends, Henry and Thompson, three hundred lashes each. It was a cleverly concocted defence, and had very nearly succeeded.

We managed to get up some very good theatricals, military and civilians combining their talents. I had always a great idea that I could act; a cousin of my mother's, named Prescott, had left the army and gone on the stage, much to the disgust of his family. He had been a captain in the Artillery, and his Thespian name was Ward, and a first rate actor he was.

My first part was "Sheepface" in the "Village Lawyer," and I managed to get through it with great applause. I afterwards played "Dan" in "John Bull," "Stephen" in the "Poor Gentleman," and many other parts.

But our best performer was a limb of the law called "Cauty." His performance of "Dr. Panglos" in the "Heir at Law," and "Caleb Quotem" in the "Review," could not have been surpassed on any stage. Our Colonel fancied he could act, and was trusted with the part of the Magistrate in the "Village Lawyer." He was a very tall, thin man, and had to put on an immense false belly for the character. What little he had to say he forgot; but, during a solemn silence, a voice was suddenly heard, "Good God! my belly's coming down." You may imagine the roars of laughter. Our worthy Colonel did not act again. Cauty had been in the East India Company's Service, and was tried with the celebrated duellist, Bryan Maguire, at Calcutta, I think, before the Chief Justice, for some desperate assault. They were acquitted, and in their desks were found three or four loaded pistols, with which they said they intended to shoot his Lordship if they had been found guilty.

Bryan Maguire was certainly a most bloodthirsty ruffian, but little Cauty appeared

quite the contrary, and was a jolly, amusing little fellow; never free, however, from duns and debts.

The head-quarters of our regiment were now at Demerara, the left wing at Berbice, where I was ordered. Previous to my departure a letter was received from private Boyle, in Antigua, written before his execution, and in which he prophesied the sad fate of Jeremiah Timmons, so soon fulfilled. It was read on parade to the men.

I embarked in a small schooner, and, after a couple of days' sail, reached New Amsterdam, Berbice, and proceeded to the barracks in Fort Cange. The officer in command was my dear old friend and chum Jack Barrett, while Dowman, my young chum, had also arrived from Mahaica. Some of the officers were going to a tea-party given by a Mrs. O'Connor, wife of an officer of the ordnance department. This gentleman had risen from the ranks, in which position he was when his better half was married to him. They were very old, but in all my life I never met such a "raal Irish couple." Although forty years must have elapsed since they left the Green

Isle, you would imagine, from their accent and language, that they had only recently left it. To make up the comic trio, an old discharged soldier from the 65th, named Barney O'Reardon, lived with them as servant. There was about a dozen people at the party, and the tea-things were all arranged; but the tea was not brought up in time, and Mrs. O'Conner began to utter maledictions against Barney. At length her patience being exhausted, she rushed out to the verandah and shouted out, "Och, Barney, will ye bring up the pot?"

"What pot, Ma'am?" replied the matter-of-fact Barney from below.

"The taypot, ye blaguard, to be sure," retorted his angry mistress.

I think we all laughed until we cried.

The barracks was a very fine building, close on the sea, but the mosquitoes and sandflies were frightful. Every night large bundles of wet straw furnished by Government were placed outside the men's rooms, and, being set fire to, the soldiers slept the best way they could in the midst of the smoke.

We lost a great number of men from fever at Berbice. We used to bathe in a large creek flowing from the sea, officers and men together. One day while swimming about, a fine young sergeant named McCann threw up his arms, gave a loud scream, and sank. The water being coloured with blood, we concluded he must have been seized by a shark or alligator, as his body was never recovered. We kept a boat, and sometimes would row for miles up the magnificent river Essiquibo, the scenery of which was most beautiful, enlivened as it was by multitudes of birds of the most brilliant hues, the number of which was perfectly astonishing.

Talking of these birds, I had rather a bad bargain of them. Having managed to scrape together about twenty pounds, I expended the coin in purchasing two large boxes of stuffed ones to send to a rich old aunt in Scotland, not unnaturally expecting compound interest by return in the shape of a hundred, or at least a fifty pound note. The presents were sent, and a letter, with many thanks, received in return, but, alas for the notes, they were *non sunt inventi*, but, in

place, a "Life of Colonel Gardiner," and a new edition of the "Pilgrim's Progress," presented themselves to console me.

When I returned to home service, I received a copy of these valuable works regularly every year from the old lady, varied now and then by "Keith on the Prophecies," or, as poor Owen P—— used to say, "Mr. O'Kaafe on the Profits." This work I was requested to read on Sunday evenings to the officers at mess, a copy being sent by my worthy aunt for their benefit, and the good old lady always believed, not only that her present had been received and appreciated, but that her desire had been obeyed, and that it had been the salvation of the souls of many who had been present when it was read.

On one occasion, pulling up the Essequibo, we came across an enormous boa-constrictor swimming about the river, but we did not attempt to interfere with his bath.

Berbice appeared to be a perfect colony of Scotchmen, or rather Highlanders. Such an array of Frasers, Grants, Matthesons, and McDonalds, you could have met nowhere save in the Highlands. A very fine-looking

set of men they were, and hospitality itself. I must say abroad give me a Scot for hearty kindness and warm welcome. We passed many very pleasant days at their plantations in the country. On one occasion while out shooting, I came in very close proximity to a jaguar or panther of the country, at a time when the brute was not more than twenty or thirty yards from me. I made myself scarce as quickly as possible, and I was much gratified at finding he did the same. These animals will seldom or never attack men, but are deadly enemies to cattle, and two cows had been carried off by them the night before from the plantation I was staying at.

On another occasion I came across the dead body of a negro, who had died by the bite of a rattlesnake. The body was swollen to twice its original size. Indeed it is very dangerous shooting, from the number of snakes in South America, and their deadly venom. On one occasion I was very nearly bitten by a "Labarri," which, however, was fortunately killed by a soldier within a foot of my leg.

About this time we received a party of

volunteers from the 93rd Highlanders, who landed at Berbice. We had often heard of the desertion of their schoolmaster from Antigua some years before under rather surprising circumstances, which occasioned the belief that he had been allowed for the credit of the regiment to desert. I had never seen or heard anything more about the man, and knew not that he had ever returned to the regiment; but on witnessing the disembarkation of the detachment, my attention was drawn to a fine-looking and rather elderly man. The moment I saw him, something whispered to me that this was the man I had heard of as the schoolmaster. So strong was my persuasion, that I would have betted any money on its certainty, though when I first saw him I had no more idea of his being alive or coming to the regiment than I had of the man in the moon. He was a very troublesome man for a long time, being a great lawyer; but ultimately reformed, and became a very useful soldier—a teetotaller and lecturer. If we could believe his own account, his life had been a wonderful one. He had been a pirate, and I know not what,

during his desertion in America; but ultimately became a very different character, and died warder in one of the military prisons in Malta.

There was always a guard of a corporal and six men upon the Court-house, situated a little way out of the town of Amsterdam. In this Court-house all colonial papers, and, I believe, the money of local charities were kept. One morning a report was spread that the Court-house had been found broken into, and several thousand dollars stolen, the property of widows and children of the colony. The guard who had been on duty that night were summoned to the Court held to investigate the affair, and I, as acting adjutant, went to watch the proceedings on the part of the men, who, of course, not without apparent reason, were supposed to be the robbers.

The person who had charge of the charities was a gentleman named S——ks, an ill-looking Scotchman, about forty-five years of age. This man made himself so very officious in bringing papers, &c., before the magistrates, that suddenly the same kind of

presentiment came over me as I had felt only two days before, when I saw the schoolmaster, and there arose in my mind the conviction that there had been no robbery, but that the despoiler of the widows and orphans was before me in the person who was making himself so busy in his endeavours to fix the crime on others—evidently on my men.

In his observations and evidence, he said "that the robbery must have been perpetrated by those perfectly well acquainted with the premises, and that the soldiers being constantly on guard over them, were the most likely persons to know where the money was kept." I could not stand this, and stepping forward to the magistrate, I informed him that, with the exception of the corporal, every man of the guard had arrived in Berbice only two days before, as volunteers from the 93rd Regiment, and therefore could not be acquainted with the premises, and that it was not very likely that in so short a time they could concoct or contrive so daring a robbery, if, I could not help saying, "there had been any robbery at all."

S——k's face grew of a ghastly white

when he heard this view suggested, and he stammered out,

"No robbery, Sir! What do you mean? Explain yourself. You are casting an imputation upon me. Good G—d, no robbery!"

"I mean to say," said I, addressing the magistrates, "that I am here to protect the soldiers. Mr. S——k states that it must have been people well acquainted with the premises who committed the robbery. I have now shown that the men on guard last night had only been two days in the Colony, and therefore the remarks of Mr. S——k could not be applicable to them, and I again assert, if there was a robbery, no soldier was concerned in it."

The magistrates perfectly concurred in my opinion, and the soldiers were dismissed without a slur on their character.

On going back to the Fort, I told my brother-officers I was convinced that there had been no robbery, but that the money had been made away with by S——k, who had full control over it. The general conviction was that my opinion was fully sub-

stantiated, when it was discovered next morning that S——k had bolted from New Amsterdam. What became of him—whether he was taken or not—I cannot say, but the defalcation was a very large one.

There had been a very queer fellow, chaplain for some time to the troops—and in the West Indies, I must say, we do meet some very "rum clergy," as they say in Ireland. B—— was a very eccentric individual. He had married during the war, and spent his honeymoon in Portsmouth. Not feeling very well, a friend of his, the captain of a man-of-war, asked him to go on a short cruise for the benefit of his health. He accepted the invitation, and joined the vessel, leaving his newly-made wife on shore. While in the Channel, letters were brought on board, directing the captain to start at once on secret service to the Mediterranean. Our parson, considering, no doubt, that this extended trip would completely re-establish his health, went with him, and never saw his wife for twenty-eight years. While abroad, he obtained a chaplaincy to the troops, and never came home. A story is told of him

that, when at Corfu, having to bury a soldier who had died there, he had ridden to the burying-ground on a very wild, restive young horse. When he proceeded to discharge his sacred functions, he gave the animal to a boy to hold, with strict injunctions not on any account to mount him. Proceeding with the burial service, the coffin was in the act of being lowered into the grave, when the parson, looking towards the gate, observed the boy on his horse, and the brute running away at full speed. "There he goes," said his Reverence, "and the devil can't stop him." The soldiers, naturally imagining he was apostrophising the corpse which they were lowering into the grave, were not a little astonished at this most unclerical exclamation.

This strange specimen of a parson went to the West Indies, and dining one night with the officers at Fort Cange, he, as customary took a full quantity of wine—more than was good for him in a word—and next day, which was Sunday, not having quite recovered from his last night's debauch, his audience were electrified when, at a certain part of the

Litany, they heard him pray, "From battle, and murder, and sudden death, *and the officers of Fort Cange*, Good Lord, deliver us!"

He preached a sermon one day to the soldiers, a most furious diatribe against drinking. Knowing that he had had quite enough himself before, I said to him,

"Why, Mr. B——, I did not think you would have been so violent against liquor this morning, considering how freely you indulged in it yourself last night."

"My dear boy," he replied, "if you had the d—d headache I have, you'd have preached against it too."

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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